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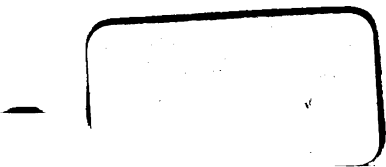
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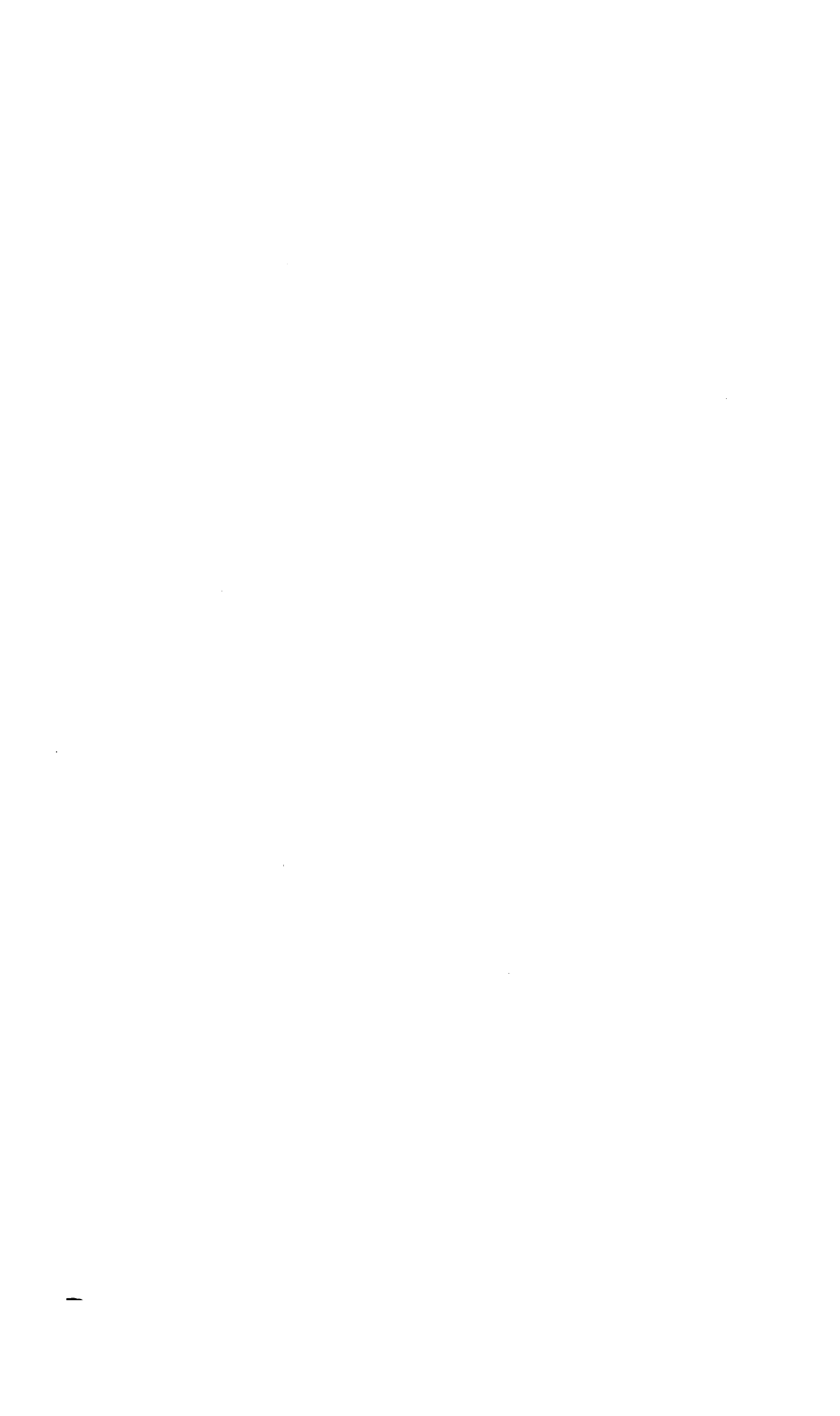


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# THE AMERICAN

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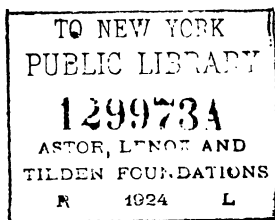
IN

## PARIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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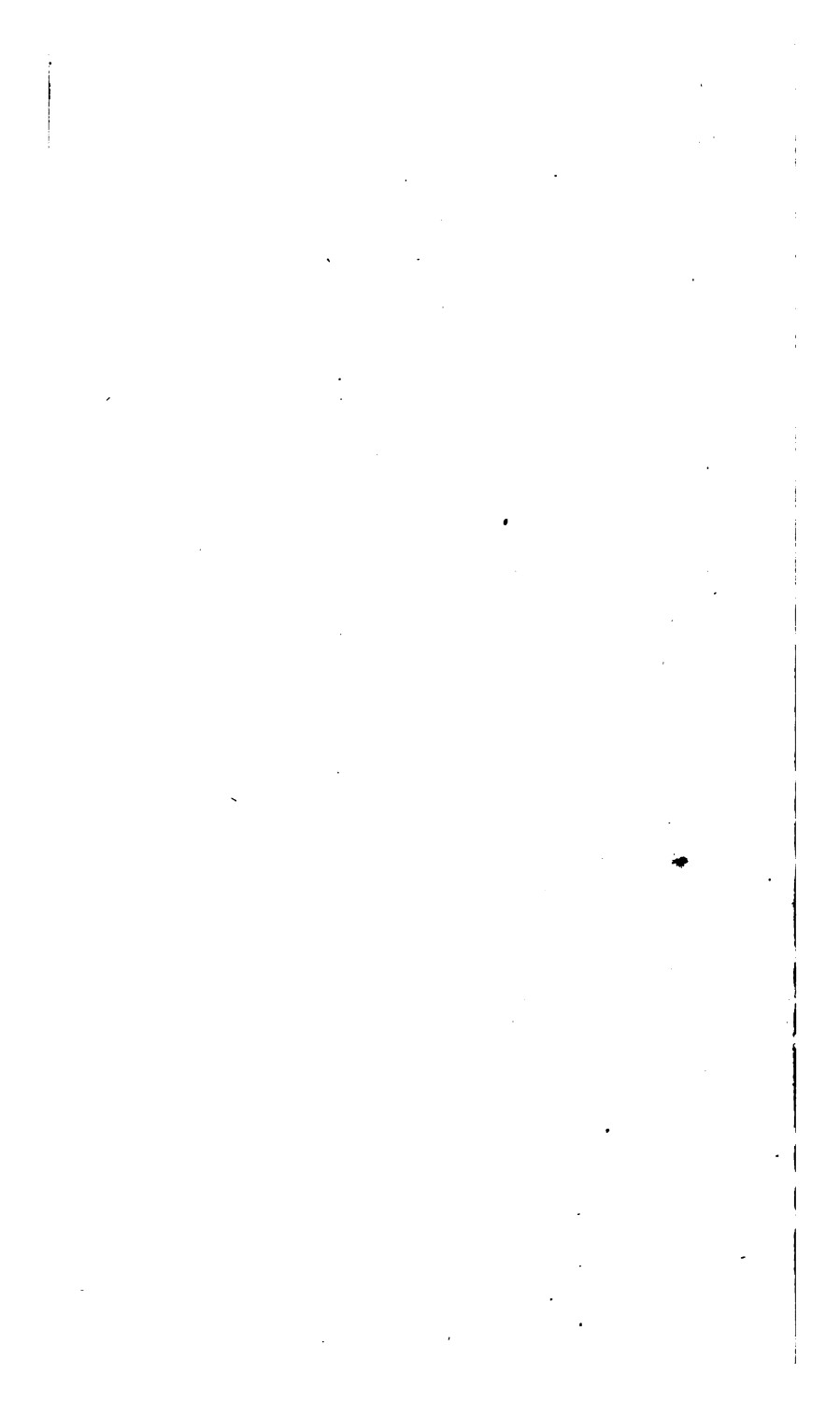
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# THE AMERICAN IN PARIS.

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## LETTER XII.

Mass at St. Roch for Admiral de Rigny. — The Abbé Lacordaire at Notre Dame. — State of the French Church. — St. Genevieve. — St. Etienne du Mont. — The American child at Prayers. — St. Medard. — Its Miracles. — Chapelle de St. Nicholas. — The Madelaine. — Notre Dame. — St. Denis. — St. Sulpice. — The Church Service. — Celibacy of the Clergy. — American Churches. — Manner of keeping Sunday.

• Paris, November 14th, 1835.

I ATTENDED yesterday a mass said at St. Roch's for the soul of the Admiral de Rigny, who was famous, you know, for much fighting at sea and land, especially at Navarino, and for much talking in the Chamber of Peers about the American Indemnity. — He was never chary about dying, he said, but he thought it unlucky to be snatched away just when he was wanted to chastise "Old

Hickory" for his impudent Message. By-the-bye, all the world is talking of war here by the hour, with great fluency and ignorance. Newspapers and conversation are full of abuse. They send out privateers by five hundreds, and take our ships as kites catch chickens. Worst of all, they don't leave an American alive, and they kill us all off without losing a man. — The Admiral's hearse was rich with the spoils of vanquished enemies, and was escorted by ten thousand French heroes to *Père la Chaise*, with thrilling music from all the military bands, and with a pomp and circumstance suitable to the dignity of so great a personage.

I went this morning with every body to Notre Dame, to hear the celebrated Abbé Lacordaire preach. He was too eloquent ! Oratory in this country, at least in the pulpit, has her trumpet always at full blast, and announces the smallest little news with the emphasis of a miracle. Her method is to run up to the top of the voice and then pour out her whole spirit, as your Methodists on Guinea Hill, until human nature is exhausted, and then to take a drink and begin again. I will set you a French sermon, if you please, to the gamut, and you may play it on the piano.

You must know, that the Parisian young men having gained great credit at the last Revolution, (and they were not oppressed with modesty before that event,) now give the tone to society. The device of the nation is "Young France." It is young France that measures merit and deals out reputation; so it is not strange that they should set up this Abbé for a Bossuet or a Bourdaloue; any more than that an eye unpractised in painting should set up a tawdry piece of daubing above the chaste and excellent compositions of genius. It is true, there is not a class of young men in any country more earnest in the pursuit of letters, than these French; but youth is not the age of good taste, and is not the age that ought to govern public sentiment in any department of life.

In old France, the church being rich and honourable, was filled by persons well educated and refined by good society. For a long time, there has been no permanent public esteem to encourage talent among the clergy, or restrain them from vices degrading to their order. Religion, which had nearly perished in the Revolution, had but a feeble health under the Empire; and Louis XVIII. and Charles so favoured the priesthood, especially the Jesuits, and at the

#### 4 THE ROYAL FAMILY ATTEND CHURCH.

same time so mis-governed the nation, that they had again brought it to its last gasp at the accession of Louis Philippe. There was a time when even admission to the Duchess de Berri's balls required one to go to the communion and take the sacrament. The present king has fallen in with the popular sentiment, and is gradually changing this sentiment to the side of the clergy, showing in this, as in most things else, the ability of a good statesman. He sends his own family to church, and it begins to be fashionable to be seen there. Not indeed from any reverence for religion.

Things venerable in this country have had their day, and, as far as religion is concerned, the bump of veneration is worn out of the human skull. But the world rushes to Notre Dame in the morning, and to the Opera in the evening, and to both, for the same purpose; for the crowd, for the music and dramatic effect, for the emotion, for the fashion. I had a student with me this morning; a young gentleman, who has just made his debut in the world of beards, and judging from his conversation, it would take a fifty-parson power at least to get him to heaven; but he was enthusiastic in ad-

miration of the sermon. Let the Abbé Lacordaire preach when he will, Notre Dame is mobbed with worshippers.

I believe I shall take advantage of my unusual seriousness, as it is Sunday, to tell you all I know about such divine things as French churches. Almost every saint in the Almanack has acquired the honours of at least one. There are forty-five of Roman, one of Greek, and two of Independent French Catholics; and the churches for Protestant service, are three French, and two English, besides a synagogue; and there are several places of worship in private houses and palaces.

All the Catholic churches are decorated with the most costly furniture; with saints, virgins, and angels in statuary and painting by the best masters. Why, the gold and silver expended in this old church of Notre Dame upon Virgin Marys alone, would make a railroad to the Havre.

One of the most beautiful of these churches and my next neighbour too, is *St. Genevieve*, now called the *Pantheon*, once the "abode of Gods whose shrines no longer burn." It is now the national sepulchre for great men. It

is two hundred and fifty feet high, and overtops majestically all Paris. It was designed to rival the Great St. Paul's of London.

On one of the cupolas of the dome, which is surrounded by a colonnade of Corinthian pillars, is painted the apotheosis of St. Geneviève. Her saintship is in the costume of a shepherdess, breathing all peace, all happiness, all immortality. Nothing of earth is in her composition. Beside her, is Louis XVIII. and little winged angels. They are very busy — the angels — in scattering flowers about the saint. Above her, is Louis XVI. and his queen, as elegant as she was upon the threshold of Versailles, and Louis XVII. all surrounded by celestial glory. Before her, are the persons the most illustrious of each race; Clovis, who looks very savage; St. Clotilde, very pretty; Charlemagne, very heroic; and St. Louis and Queen Margarine who look very pious. They are now effacing these figures for something more suitable to the occasion.

The floor of this temple, incrustated with various-coloured marble, is very remarkable, and very beautiful. It is exclusively occupied by Voltaire and Rousseau, at opposite extremities.\*

\* Who would have thought that these two champions of Infidelity, who were refused Christian burial, would



Why did they not lay them at the side of each other, that we might all learn how vain are the jealousies, the petty competitions and animosities of men so soon to come to this appointed and unavoidable term of all human contentions. These are the only two who are buried above ground.

It was once the custom of these old countries to multiply a man by burying him piecemeal, his heart at Rouen and his legs in Kent, because the world was then on short allowance of heroes ; but modern times have reversed this practice ; and Bonaparte has laid up together a whole batch of them in the basement of this church, for eternity, as you lay up potatoes in your cellar for winter. Here are the names graven overhead in a catalogue, on the marble, of men famous for giving counsel to the Emperor (who never took any) in the senate, and of men who gained a great deal of celebrity by having their brains knocked out on the fields of Austerlitz and Marengo.

When Marat was deified by the Convention, one day, have assigned to their remains, the first church of France, and one of the first in Christendom, as their mausoleum. I wonder if Jean Jaques, in his prophetic visions, foresaw this ?

he was interred here in 1793, and in 1794 he was disinterred and undeified, and then thrown into his native element, the common sewer, in the Rue Montmartre—to purify him.

I have often sat an hour in a beautiful little temple adjoining this, called *St. Etienne du Mont*. Its architecture is original and pretty, and it is rich in statuary and paintings. The pulpit is a splendid piece of workmanship, supported by a figure of Samson kneeling upon a dead lion; allegorical figures are hovering over, and an archangel, with two trumpets, is assembling the faithful. The painted glass, too, is brilliant with colours glowing as the rainbow. In a morning walk, I have often found an excuse for returning this way. A few persons, mostly women, are seen kneeling through the church, upon the marble, before the altar, silently—you hear but the little whispering prayers fluttering towards Heaven—the tranquillity of early morning is so favourable to devotion. It feels like giving to Heaven the first offerings of one's heart. I have often sat here on the fine summer evenings, too, when the twilight shed its gray and glimmering rays through the windows upon the statues of the venerable saints and martyrs, and listened to the voices as they swelled in the

sacred anthem, and then fell, with the departing day, into silence. It seemed to me the very romance of religion. One feels more the influence of such feelings when wandering alone in a foreign country.

In visiting a boarding-school of this quarter, a few days ago, I entered a room where the children were praying before retiring to bed ; I observed one with his hands clasped, and pouring out his little soul with the fervency of a saint—an American child, of eight years, from New York—I took him in my arms at the end of his prayer, saying : “ *Vous aimez donc bien, le bon Dieu?* ” — “ *Ah! oui,* ” he replied, with a most eloquent expression, “ *on aime bien le bon Dieu quand on est loin de ses parens.* ” — It is so natural to lay hold of heaven, when cut off from one’s home and earthly affections. If I had the amiable society of your “Two Hills,” and the other comforts and consolations of the village, I should not be hovering so piously about this little church of St. Etienne du Mont.

The great Pascal, in spite of the Jesuits’ noses, is buried here ; and an old tower, in the neighbourhood, recalls the memory of the renowned Abbey of St. Genevieve. I have visited, several times, the library of this institu-

tion, and paid my respects to its one hundred and fifty thousand volumes, and thirty thousand manuscripts. This, like all the other places of Paris, where they keep books, is filled constantly with readers, and, like every other institution of the kind, is open gratuitously to the public.

I spoke of *Val de Grace* in my last letter. A little to the east of it, and of not less historical importance, is the church of *St. Medard*; to which I stretched, also, one of my solitary walks, and took a seat among the worshippers. Faint hymns, chanted at a distance, as the still evening comes on, have lured many a wandering sinner from the wickedness of the world. This is the church so famous for its miracles, called the "convulsions," which once filled the whole city with alarm; and were not discontinued, until the archbishop had placed a strong military guard around the tomb of father Paris. You know the placard put up by some wag on this occasion :

" De par le roi, defense à Dieu,  
De faire miracle en ce lieu."

The young girls used to have fits at this tomb, which gave them comical twitchings of

the nerves. Some would bark all night long at the door of their chambers, and others leap about like frogs all day. Sister Rose supped the air with a spoon, as your babies do pap, and lived on it forty days; another swallowed a New Testament, bound in calf. Some had themselves hung, others crucified, and one, called Sister Rachel, when nailed to a cross, said she was quite happy—" *qu'elle faisait dodo.*" In their holy meetings, they beat, trampled, punctured, crucified, and burnt one another, without the least sentiment of pain. All this was done at St. Medard, under Louis XV., and attested by ten thousand witnesses.

Large packages of the earth were exported to work miracles, in the provinces and foreign countries. One of these miracles is told in a song of the Duchesse de Maine.

" Un decrotteur à la royale,  
Du talon gauche estropié,  
Obtint par grace speciale,  
D'être boiteux de l'autre pied."

Some of these fanatics were found, forty years afterwards, in the dungeons of the Bastille, at its destruction in 1789.

There is one point in religion, in which there

are no heretics out of Scotland—the music. The choir of voices, which assisted the organs in this church, seemed to be almost divine. One feminine voice, singing occasionally alone, had all the powers of enchantment; swelling sometimes into a strain of almost religious frenzy, and then melting softly away till there was nothing between it and silence; and just in front of me, and in full view, sat a handsome woman, wrapped entirely in her devotional enjoyments, who seemed placed there expressly to give effect to the music; her shoulders, arms, and features, all moved in exact unison with its harmony. I wish you could have seen her beautiful countenance as she presented it to the firmament; her sainted smile which beamed out and waned away upon her lips; the devout expression of her eyes, how illuminated as the music rose, how languishing in its dying notes; how she expired, and then came to life again! I do not hope to see again on the earth a more vivid picture of religious rapture.

Devotion, I believe, exalts a woman's beauty to its highest perfection; there is no picture so beautiful as the Madonna, and, if I were a woman, I would be religious, if for no other motive, just from vanity. No one doubts that

the human countenance is modified by the feelings cherished in the heart, and she who cherishes the mild and benevolent Christian affections, cannot be otherwise than very pretty. If there are any ugly women in the world, it is because they have not been brought up religiously. I sat thinking all this over, till night came on, and I felt one or two of sister Rose's twitches.

I am going to tell you next of the *Chapelle de St. Nicholas*; which you will find intrenched under the *Palais de Justice*. This is the "*Sainte Chapelle*," made famous by the Lutrín of Boileau. It is the most classical, as well as the most holy of the churches of Paris. It was built by St. Louis. It was here he stowed away the relics he brought from the Holy Land. The "real crown" was one of them, which he bought for eighty thousand dollars, and which, walking barefooted, and bareheaded, and preceded by all the prelates and dignitaries of the kingdom, in solemn procession, he deposited in this shrine. There were, besides, Moses' rod and a great many other such miracles, which the Emperor of Constantinople manufactured, they say, expressly for his use. And, also, a great variety of presents from popes, cardinals,

and other holy men, of less equivocal value. A light was burnt here, as in the Temple of Vesta, and a priest waked and watched over them at all hours of the night. They are now—what remains from the sacrilegious and pilfering fingers of the Revolution—in the sacristy of Notre Dame; and their place is supplied by old musty records of the Palais de Justice; lawyers' declarations, and nasty crim. con. cases—even to the receipt of the Marchioness de Brinvilliers for making the poison she tried so effectually upon her father, husband, and brother. Boileau is buried in this chapel, made immortal by his verses.

For architectural effect, the Madelaine has an unquestionable superiority over all the churches of Paris. It has the advantage of a very favourable site; terminating with one flank, the view from the Boulevards, and fronting the Rue Royale, and Place Louis XV. It is mounted on a basement of eight feet, ascended on its entire perimeter by thirty steps. It is a parallelogram of three hundred and twenty-six, by one hundred and thirty feet, surrounded in double peristyle, by fifty-two Corinthian columns sixty feet high. On the south pediment, is represented in bas-relief, the Day of Judg-



ment; the figures of sixteen feet. In the middle is Christ, and at his feet Madelaine, a suppliant. The rest of the group, is of angels, and allegorical vices and virtues; covering a triangular surface of one hundred and eighteen feet in length, and twenty-two in height.

The interior is a rich and variegated picture. The eye is dazzled at the glittering aspect of its gilding and fanciful decorations; its Ionic and Corinthian pillars. On each flank are three chapels to be adorned with painting, and at the extremity is the choir in the shape of a demi-cylinder, with Ionic pilasters which extend along the two aisles. It was begun in the year of our Independence; it was the "Temple of Glory" in the Revolution, and has got back to its religious destination. It has neither dome nor spire, nor any of the usual emblems of a Christian church, except the sculpture; so that in the event of another Revolution, it may be converted into an Exchange or Bank, or the temple of some Pagan divinity, or a Mosque, without much expense of alteration.

The good lady, Notre Dame, is the largest of the Parisian churches. The adjoining houses squat down in her presence and seem to worship her; and she is not only admirable for her beauty and

richness, but for her sense. She has the history of eight centuries in her nave. She has the whole of the Old and New Testament in pictures on her walls, or in groups of statuary, in her chapels. When you sit down under the arched vaults, one hundred and twenty feet over your head, and amidst these massive columns, you see flitting about your imagination, such personages as Queen Fredegonda; or if you please, you can see the pretty Marchioness de Gourville confessing, instead of her sins, her tender loves for the Archbishop of Paris. You can live back into those times when Henry IV. was d——d, and Ravallac, being anointed and prayed over, in bad Latin, went to heaven.

The light is let in upon her dread abodes by one hundred and thirteen windows, each bordered with a band of painted glass. There are three circular ones painted in the thirteenth century which are not matched, for the delicacy of the stone-work, and brilliancy of the colours, by any thing of modern art.

The choir is paved with precious marble, and enclosed by a railing of polished iron; in the centre of it, is an eagle in gilt brass seven feet high, and three and a half from wing to wing, which serves as a reading desk. Its wainscot-

ing is sculptured with scriptural pieces, and a great many sins in the shape of toads and lizards are carved upon it. It terminates near the sanctuary with two archiepiscopal chairs of great beauty.

The other day, in climbing up through one of the towers, from which there is a splendid panoramic view of the city, two hundred and four feet in the air, I fell in with that famous old bell, Emanuel, whose clapper alone weighs nine hundred and seventy-six pounds. Clappers of this kind do not speak on ordinary occasions. This one announces in a very hoarse and solemn voice, only the approach of some great festival, or an extraordinary event. On July 27th, five years ago, it pealed at midnight, and all night long, the awful tocsin of revolt; and upon these two towers, the tricoloured flag floated triumphant on the 29th.

It was to this church that the world used to come in their gala dresses to thank Providence for all those victories which are carved on the great triumphal column; every time a bulletin came in from Italy and Germany announcing the event, and when a new prince ascended the throne. They came here to thank God for Louis XVIII, then for Charles, and then for

Louis Philippe. Providence is always sure of its thanks in this church, whichever side is uppermost.

In Paris, the meanest hovels are striving which shall be nearest the church. Notre Dame is a venerable and noble lady, with a brood of filthy and ragged children about her. We have the same ungracious image often in America. In Philadelphia, there is but a step from St. Stephens' to the Stews. This is chiefly caused by the vicinity of grave yards; a senseless arrangement, which has happily grown out of fashion in this country. It is deplorable that we should patronize every silly practice that Europe is shaking off.

The fashionable church, of all the churches, is St. Roch's, of which I have spoken in a former letter. To this, the old lady queen, and the little queenies, and all the prettiest women of Paris, come to be blessed every Sunday. A fine woman is a hymn to the Deity, said some old philosopher. If you wish to see a great number of these hymns, praising most eloquently the workmanship of their divine Author, come to St. Roch's about twelve. A priest told me there was more merit in saving a pretty woman than an ugly one, on account of

the enormity of her temptations ; an ugly one goes to heaven of herself. The skill of the musician makes the only distinction between the hallelujahs of St. Roch's, and the addios of the Italien.

While on the chapter of churches, I must not forget the Cathedral of St. Denis, a few miles out of town, the burial place of the French kings. The village, which was built on account of the church, and its monastery, and the number of pilgrims that resorted there, is now as filthy and stupid as suburban villages always are. About ten thousand persons are doing penance by living there ; enough to take them to heaven without any other effort. In 1436 it was taken and rifled by the English, who frightened the nuns desperately, and carried off their most precious things. A bit of the iron grate or gridiron on which St. Francis was burnt, and the prophet Isaiah's bones, with not a few of the little nuns themselves, were amongst the articles stolen. The cathedral is gothic and magnificent. On the first floor, you will see the tomb of *Dagobert*, the founder ; a splendid mausoleum of Francis I., in white marble, and opposite, the tomb of Louis XII., surmounted by the naked figures of the king and his con

sort in a recumbent posture, and the tomb of Henry de Valois, with the images of Henry II., and Queen Catharine de Medicis. In the centre of the basement, is a vault of octagonal shape, which contains the ashes of the monarchs all in a lump.

——“Dead but sceptered sovereigns,  
Who rule our spirits in their urns.”

These verses have lost their meaning: but the little urn saith “more than a thousand homilies.”

Around the circumference are cenotaphs, upon which the several kings repose in marble at the side of their marble wives. Two unanointed men were admitted amongst them; Duguesclin and Turenne. Bonaparte removed the latter to the Invalids, and Duguesclin was lost entirely in the Revolution. The convention issued a decree for the total destruction of this royal cemetery in 1793. The first graves examined were those of Henry IV., and Marshal Turenne. Both these heroes were as fresh, as the day they were killed, while all those who had died in the natural way, were in a state of dissolution. The kings were transferred to a vulgar grave, with the grass only of the field for a monument;

the ghosts of the mighty Bourbons were turned loose to range upon the commons : the lead too was stripped from the cathedral to shoot the enemies of the Republic. The church was repaired by Napoleon, who destined it to be the burial place of " the Emperors." *Diis aliter visum.* Fortune provided him a much more remarkable grave. Future ages will no doubt go on a pilgrimage to St. Helena ; here he would have mingled with the rabble dust of the French kings.

The farther reparation of the church was reserved for the piety of Louis XVIII. I walked out to St. Denis as the saint did once himself, except that he carried his head under his arm. Returning home, as I was no saint, I got into a *coucou* at the side of some queer old peasant women and heard their conversation. I am sorry the dignity of my subject does not allow me to report it to you in this letter.

Many others of these churches seem to me very entertaining, but I must postpone them to another time ; with only a respectful look upon the great *St. Sulpice* in front of my window, whose huge towers are staring me reproachfully in the face ; and I must say a word in parting with the subject of the *Chapelle Expiatoire* of the

Madelaide. This chapel is placed over the ground in which reposed for twenty-two years the bodies of Louis XVI., and Marie Antoinette. The interior is in form of a cross. In the centre, is the altar, exactly over the spot in which the royal bodies were found, and in the lateral branches are their statues. The entrance through an alley of yew trees, sycamores and cypresses, gives it the air and solemnity of an antique tomb. It is the most mournful spot of all Paris. On the Sunday mornings, mass is said here with great solemnity; and early every day you will see a few persons kneeling in silent worship by the altar, or in solitary corners through the church.

The duties of the Catholic churches are administered by an Archbishop with an annual salary of 5,000 dollars; three vicars general, 800 dollars, and between two and three hundred priests at 300 dollars each. The grand Rabbin has 1200; the little Rabbins from one to four hundred, and a protestant clergyman has from two to six hundred dollars. So you see, the French patronize all sorts of religions, and Moses and St. Peter come in alike for their share of the church funds. But what a change of circumstances! The church revenue of France



was, before the Revolution, twenty-seven millions of dollars ; at present it is six millions. The clergy of old France exceeded four hundred thousand ; of " young France," they are rated at thirty thousand !

In the service of a French Catholic church, there are officers in a military costume ; there are processions and pageantry, and loud and impassioned music. Every thing is prepared for vehement impressions, for theatric effect. I should like a religion intermediate between this Catholic vivacity and our Presbyterian dulness. Whoever believes that any association of men can be held together without forms and ceremonies has much yet to learn of the nature of his species, and whoever would dispense with even the forms which are ridiculous in society, would be himself the most ridiculous man in it. Still, some regard is to be had in this to the popular sentiment and spirit of the age.

There is certainly much absurd and trumpery ceremony kept up in this church, designed formerly for a mass of ignorant people, when the general sense of the world and the infidel propensities of the French have got far a-head of it. That Louis XVIII. should go all the way to Rheims and be greased with some drops saved

from the Jacobins, of that same oil or "holy cream" brought by a dove from heaven to anoint king Pepin, was presuming too far upon the stupidity of the times. Surely the age of such nonsense and bigotry has gone by. The elevating the host and processions through the church, are neither solemn nor dignified, and what position has so little dignity as that of the priest kneeling at the altar, with a little boy holding up the tail of his surplice in the face of the congregation?

In these times of popular education, every body reads and reasons, and general learning, by cheap publications, is brought within every one's reach. The common man, who is fed by twopenny knowledge, is almost as learned upon common affairs, as the gentleman who feasts upon his guinea a volume; so that a ceremony that was very solemn in the last age, may be very notable for its absurdity in this. Not half a century ago, a doctor of medicine did not visit a patient in this city unless his head was first wrapped in a huge wig—*perruque à trois marteaux*; and if he forgot his cane with the golden head he turned back for it, though his patient in the mean time should die. A ring too, with a diamond on his finger, and laced ruffles, were

indispensable to his practice. In condemning this Catholic flummery, I do not go into the opposite Presbyterian extreme, and proscribe what is rational and sensible, the music, the paintings, and statuary. There is no more occasion in these times to take measures against idolatry than against witchcraft ; and why deprive our churches of what gratifies the senses innocently, excites devotional feelings, and improves the taste and understanding ?

But to keep a religion now in favour with the world, requires unexceptionable virtue on the part of those who administer its duties ; and the celibacy of the priesthood seems to me directly adverse to such a requirement. It is not likely, that human nature will be controlled in one of her strongest impulses with impunity. When I see these rosy and smart looking priests, who haunt the churches, and reflect upon the penchant of the women for holy men, I cannot help wishing, for the sake of the catholic religion, that they were married. I would not go bail for any one of them under the merit of St. Anthony.

The intrigues and libertinism of the French and Italian clergy are matters of authentic history. There was a time when a cardinal's

hat depended on the patronage of the candidate's mistresses. The Cardinals de Retz, Richelieu, Mazarin and Dubois were the notorious roués of the day. I see here every where a set of jovial-looking monks, with their caps over the right eye, who would drink your health in the sacristy. Besides, when the cares of men are limited to themselves, they lose some of the best qualities of the human heart; they become selfish. I never knew an old maid, a bachelor, or even a married woman without children, who was not an insupportable *egoist*, unless the affections nourished by matrimony were supplied from other sources; and the concern men have for their children brings out their religious as well as their social qualities into continual exercise. Not only the strongest defence against immorality, but the foundation of every public virtue is laid in the domestic affections. The Athenians would not allow any one to vote who had not a child; if I were pope, I would not permit any one to preach who had not a wife, and I would take one myself to set them the good example.

I am sorry the interior arrangements of our American churches, both catholic and protestant, are so opposed to architectural beauty. The

pew has an air of habitation ; it has the comfort, it has the sacredness of home. Families, accustomed to see each other, the year round, grow into acquaintance ; and, even without the intercourse of words, experience the joy of a friendly meeting. The humble man, also, has the satisfaction, one day in seven, of seeing himself in company with those of better fortunes, on something like terms of equality. When one gets the apostles and all the saints on one's side, one rises almost to the dignity of any body. A great man, too, can, in a church, associate a little with his inferiors without compromising his importance : all which is lost in this random and desultory way of sitting about upon chairs, as in the French churches.

A great evil of our American churches is, their great respectability, or exclusiveness. Here, being of a large size, and paid by government, the church is open to all the citizens, with an equal right and equal chance of accommodation. In ours, the dearness of pew-rent, especially in the Episcopal and Presbyterian, turns poverty out of doors. Poor people have a sense of shame ; and I know many a one who, because he cannot go to church decently, will not go at all. This is an evil we must bear, to avoid the

greater one of a church establishment. We suffer disadvantages, also, from want of religious uniformity. A thin settled community, which is just able to support one clergyman, starves three or four, or dispenses altogether with their services. A first-rate Methodist would rather not go to church at all, than take part in the litany; and what good Presbyterian would not rather be d—d, ten times over, than be seen at a mass?

In a diversity of sects, also, we are given to dogmatise too much, and define articles of faith; to follow the letter rather than the spirit of religion. The French catholic believes (if he believes any thing) in the power of absolution, in the real presence, and in the infallibility of the pope; without inquiry into the absurdity of such belief, we dogmatise and doubt and reason ourselves into infidelity; and, though we can see no essential difference in the prayers and sermons of our different clergymen, we cling to our own, as indispensable to our salvation.

Our clergy, too, of the same denomination, are often falling into schisms, in which they too often show jealousy, malice, and other bad passions, which brings religion itself into disrepute. Are these things worse than the abuses

and corruptious of undivided church establishments?

The manner of keeping Sunday is a subject of general censure amongst our American visitors at Paris. There is no visible difference between this day and the others, except that the gardens and public walks, the churches in the morning, and the ball-rooms and theatres in the evening, are more than usually crowded. In London, the bells toll on the Sunday most solemnly; the theatres and dancing rooms are silent, and all the shops (but the gin-shop) shut; yet the poor get drunk, and the equipages of the gentry parade their magnificence in Hyde Park, of a Sunday afternoon.

"How do you spend your Sundays," said a Frenchman, condoling with another, "in America?" He replied: "*Monsieur, je prends médecine.*" A Frenchman has a tormenting load of animal spirits that cannot live without employment: he has no idea of happiness in a calm; and it is not likely that he will remain *endimanché chez-lui* during the twelve hours of the day, or that his Sunday evenings would be better employed than in the theatre and ball-room.

This is my opinion; but I have great doubts

30 FRENCH MODE OF KEEPING SUNDAY.

whether a man ought to have an opinion of his own, when it does not correspond with that of others, who are notoriously wiser than himself. I cannot easily persuade myself, that nature has intended the whole of this life to be given up to a preparation for the next, else had she not given us all these means of enjoyment, all these "delicacies of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits and flowers, walks and the melody of birds."— Now this is enough about French churches.



## LETTER XIII.

Père la Chaise.—Funeral of Bellini. — Grave-Merchants. Description of the Cemetery.—Graves of the Rich and the Poor.—The Fête des Morts.—Tomb of Abelard and Heloise.—Remarkable personages buried there. — The Aristocracy of the Grave.— Monument of Foy. — Inscription.—Grave yards in Cities and Towns. — French regulations for the inhumation of the dead.

Paris, October 29th, 1835.

I TOOK advantage of a beautiful day, which peeped out yesterday, to pay my respects to *Père la Chaise*, and I am going to give you some account of this celebrated city of the dead. But what can I say? I feel scarce wit enough to talk about the weather, and I am going to tell you of that which all the world has described so beautifully. I know not the reason, but I have even less sense and imagination than usual, since I am in Paris. If it were not for Madame de Sevigné, and a few

other such characters, I would lay the blame upon the heavy, unthinking and hazy influences of these northern climates. I followed the funeral of *Bellini*, the composer, author of *Pirati*, *Puritani*, and other first-rate operas. Is it not a pity to die with so much talent at twenty-nine, when so many fools live out their four-score? I do not recollect any thing that old Methusaleh said or did, with his nine hundred years; and he could not have made such an opera as *Puritani*, if he had lived as many more. He was accompanied (*Bellini*, I mean) by the music of all Paris; and the music of the spheres must have played, this day, a sweeter harmony.

The mass of *Cherubini*, so appropriate to the occasion, and so much better than the archbishop's prayers, was forbidden by the archbishop, because it had feminine voices in it; and his worship would not have the chapel of the Invalids, all hung over so beautifully with bloody flags, profaned by musical women; not even by the exquisite *Grisi*. So we had the 39th Psalm. Don't you think the spirit of the composer must have winced? But the march, with full band, along the Boulevards for several miles, and the end of the ceremony

at Père la Chaise, were imposing. Speeches were pronounced in Italian and French by good orators ; and, among the listeners, some of us were queens and princesses. The breezes whispered through the pines, and a thunder storm, as if expressly, came over the sun, and played bass in the clouds, and the clouds themselves wept as the grave closed upon Bellini.—I went to the Invalids, with a pretty English woman, one of his scholars, who wailed his loss inconsolably, and who, for certain, was in love with him. Women, you know, always fall in love with their music masters ; Mary Queen of Scots, and the pretty Mrs. Thrale into the bargain.

This cemetery of Père la Chaise, thirty years ago, had fourteen tombs ; it counts, in the present year, fifty thousand. Hundreds of architects, and sculptors, and statuaries, besides multitudes of labourers, find here a new source of occupation, and improvement in the arts ; so that a goodly part of the present generation gets its living by the death of its predecessors. Here is a whole street of marble yards, which manufactures tombs for domestic and foreign commerce, near a mile long ; and mighty heaps of bronze, granite and marble, exquisitely chiselled, recommending themselves to the notice

of the public. Tombstones, urns, bronze gates, iron railings, crosses, pillars, pyramids, statues and all the furniture of the grave, are laid out, and exhibited here, as the merchandise of the shops and bazaars of the latest and newest fashions—"Grand Magazin à la General Foy—à l'Abelard et Heloise," &c. ; as in the city, "*Grand Magazin du Doge de Venise*," and by trying to under-bury one another, they have reduced funeral expenses in every branch to their minimum ;—there is, perhaps, no place in the world where one can die, and be buried so moderately, as in Paris. Here is one selling out at first cost, to close a concern ; and another's whole stock of tombs is brought to the hammer, by the death of the proprietor.

These grave-merchants used\* to follow the funeral processions, in swarms, to the verge of the tomb, offering to the mourners bills and advertisements, and specimens of their industry, but this emulation has been lately forbidden, by an order of police. These people have got, by professional habit, to think, like the philosophers, that the principal business of man, upon this earth, is to die. The staple of conversation is, the grave ; and there is as much pedantry here about the dead people, as in the

Latin Quarter there is about the dead languages. —“ When do you think you can pay me that bill of marble, M. Grigou ?” —“ Ah, sir ! business is very slack just now ; and the season, you see, is almost over. M. Barbeau, I have been twenty years in the trade, and never saw such times. It really seems as if people had left off dying. But, if business becomes brisk, as we expect, towards Christmas, I will pay you off then ; if not, you will have to wait till next August. — When the cholera was here — Helas ! I fear we shall never see such times again.” —“ *Eh bien, patience*, M. Grigou, we must hope for the best.”

They have here, too, a kind of Exchange, where they meet to see the state of the market — to see the newest fashions or inventions of urns and crosses, and other sepulchral images, and to read over the bills of mortality, as elsewhere one reads the price current. The joy of a death is, of course, proportionate to the worth, fashion and distinction of the individual who has died. When General Mortier was killed, on the 28th, stock rose one and a quarter. — “ Well ! what is there to-day ? ” — “ Nothing ! — and getting worse and worse ! — but what can one expect else under such a detestable govern-

ment? You remember how it was under the Restoration. Then we had such persons as Marshal Suchet, and Madame Demidoff to bury; now we bury nothing but the canaille. Even under Charles, we had some few nobles left, who could pay for a snug mausoleum; but what is a French nobleman now?—a poor, half-cut gentleman, with a ribbon in his button-hole, which he calls a decoration, and without money to pay the grave digger or the sexton. — Ah! M. Grigou, things must have a change!”

The gate of the cemetery, which terminates the view at the end of this street, is surmounted by statuary, and is magnificent, like that of some great prince. It is always besieged by equipages, and vehicles of every kind, of the visitors, who are coming and going at all hours—all except one—his equipage goes home empty! Around this entrance is a great crowd of women, all over smiles, who offer you wreaths, chaplets, and crosses of orange blossom, amaranth, and other ever-green, very prettily interwoven, and they get a living by this little trade. As you ascend the hill, you see groups of visitors, noisy and talkative, who on entering are suddenly silent, struck with the awfulness

of the place. A kind of death-chill runs through the blood. But after a closer view the mind becomes serene, and even roams with a delightful curiosity amongst the tombs.

Nearly all the ground is covered with small pines, and with fern, woodbines, and jessamines twisted into tufted thickets. There is quite a deficiency of cypress and willow, and hemlock; the vegetation is generally stunted in its growth, and looks forlorn enough indeed. Monuments of brightest marble and exquisite sculpture dazzle the eye on all sides; and there are smooth and gravelled walks, terraces, and flowery banks, paths winding along the hill-side, and little scenery of every variety; and nature has borrowed so many ornaments from art, and wears them with so lively a grace, that one is disposed rather to admiration than to melancholy musings; one would think that Hymen and Cupid and not Death walked through her hills and valleys.

This city, like living cities, has its fashionable and rabble districts; its Broadways and Chestnut streets, its Southwark, and Northern Liberties. On the summits and flanks of all the hills, or apart, and half hidden in groves of pines, are mausoleums rich with Egyptian,

Grecian, and modern luxury. It seems as if the dead, the business of life being done, had retired here to their magnificent villas. Only think of your scraggy grave-yards of Philadelphia—enough to disgust one with dying. Distinguished and learned dust is collected here from all nations, and virtues are puffed and advertised in all human languages. Whatever one may think of the French people alive, one cannot hope to meet any where a better set of dead people. Here are none but faithful husbands and incorruptible wives, and you would think it had rained patriots. As for great generals, they seem to come up in the parsley-bed as they did in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Surely Père la Chaise still exercises his office of absolution on these grounds.

At the foot of the hill are immense multitudes of dead in a level and open field, assorted in rows, as the vegetables in the Garden of Plants. These are the working people of the other world. They have no shelter of marble, or of shrubbery, or of cypress; no weeping willow hangs its branches upon the little hill of earth, but a small black board, shaped into a cross, and standing up prim at the head of each one, reveals his humble name and merits. You see



the hearse arrive here with a few attendants on foot. A priest in an old rusty gown, a boy in a frock no longer white, and an officer under a cocked hat, attend. These form a little procession from the hearse: the priest mutters an epitome of the service, and sprinkles the holy water upon the grave; he, the grave-digger, and the driver betraying not the slightest emotion in the performance of these duties; and the whole escort disappears suddenly and silently. Beyond this, is a field of a still humbler lot, where anything is buried; this they call the *Fosses communs*. They who have no money, consequently no friends, are buried here. It is a yawning excavation, into which one cannot look without horror. The corpse is carried down a long stairway, and placed without distinction of age or sex in a row alongside the corpse which preceded it; and the name of the individual is no more heard—upon the earth. He was perhaps a suicide, or a victim of some accident or murder, a stranger without a friend, or a labourer without a home. No priest attends here.—One other piece of earth, retired from the rest, has a special designation. It is the only religious distinction of the cemetery; the burial place of the Jews.

“Beneath her palm, here sad Judea weeps.”

The graves of the rich are mostly held in perpetuity; those of the poor are disposable anew at the end of every six years; the first lessee having always the right of pre-emption. There is a chapel on the highest spot of the cemetery, and from its threshold the priest has a naked view of all Paris. He has spread out before him his whole stock in trade, and sees his customers winding up the hill; of which every day furnishes him its contingent. If for the district of the poor, he performs the service, as I have described, by his deputies.

But when you see the portals of the marble palace open between the Corinthian columns, and winged angels, chiselled from the marble of Genoa, and the priest kneeling in deep devotion before the altar, all of gold; you will see at the same time the whole street leading up to the Barrière d'Aulney filled with an immense cortège of gorgeous equipages, all of crape; and you will see in the first carriages persons in deep distress, mopping their eyes, all swollen with grief. Keep in your tears, they are not the least vexed. On the contrary, they cry with a great deal of pleasure. They are crying by the month, and getting their living by it. This custom of

crying by deputy was practised by the Romans, and is common to all the refined nations of modern Europe; and it is known that hired weepers can wail and cry a great deal better than they who are really grieved; they have a greater quantity of salt water, and have given it the habit of running out by the eyes. The coffin descends from the hearse, glittering with the precious metals, and whilst music wakes around, or speeches are pronounced in eloquent grief, or masses chanted in classic Latin, it is conveyed with pomp into its vault, and laid up for eternity upon its shelf. There is a person here, who keeps a register of the names of the deceased, and is a kind of chief clerk to the Fates.

There is one day of the year when all Paris comes hither dressed in white robes, ten thousand at a time, to do honour to the dead. It looks as if the sheeted dead themselves had risen from the earth. This is called the *Fête des Morts*. Each one brings a garland or crown, and hangs it over a friend or relative; and the whole city bends before the graves of General Foy, Manuel, and Benjamin Constant. Indeed every day of the year that the weather will permit, the cemetery is crowded, either with stran-

gers led by curiosity, or with friends busied in trimming the foliage or flowers, or hanging funeral wreaths upon the monuments. This may be partly vanity, but vanity is a very good quality, if rightly directed, and a great many excellent virtues may be grafted on it. As for myself, I have always found it exceedingly difficult to practise several of the virtues when no one was looking on.

I observed, on entering, a gothic monument, and under its dome, two figures of persons recumbent at the side of each other, who were not always of marble. I will not tell you their names. If they had gone quietly with their marriage articles to St. Sulpice, and to bed, and distributed the wedding cake the next day to their cousins of St. Germain, I should not now have the pleasure of musing upon this little gothic chapel; we should have been deprived of one of the best love-tales that ever was, and some of the best verses in our English language, and *Nouvelle Heloise* into the bargain. Unsuccessful wooing, you see, has its uses. What would you gentle shepherdesses have done without Petrarch's sonnets, without Virgil's fourth book, and Sappho's little ditty, Englished by Philips.

The Republic brought this pair of lovers from Chalons to Paris, where they have been knocked about, till they have become as common as any pair of students and grisettes of the Luxembourg, (the barbarians !) instead of embowering them in the shady wood at a distance from the road, by the side of a murmuring and romantic stream, where the traveller might alight from his horse, just at setting sun, and give his undisturbed and undivided feelings to their hapless fates. Here they are, the unfortunates, alongside of any body, who has died in lawful wedlock, and their history, as if no one knew it, written upon their tomb, in fine round text, with their names. The children are learning to spell on it: a, b, *ab*; e by itself *e*; l, a, r, d, *lard*.—I am now writing from the spot, perhaps the very spot in which their hearts beat so high in love, and sank so deep in despair—in the very spot, for all I know, in the very chamber—where she “hung upon his lips, and drank delicious poison from his eye!”—where now, alas, no loves are disappointed, and where there is no drinking of any thing stronger or sweeter than a little *vin ordinaire* after one’s potage.

On leaving this fairy spot, I wandered along a hundred little footpaths, and read over a

thousand crabbed names, which carried no signification to the mind, of a thousand polite nothings, who had put on their breeches in the morning and taken them off at night, and who have monuments in Père la Chaise for such merits—to Monsieur *Doda*, who made excellent *patés de foies gras*; besides, he made the Papage *Verò-Doda*, and he has the mausoleum of a prince, splendid with festoons, I believe of sausages, on the pediment; and a Monsieur *Sebastian*, who made shoes for the Duchesse de Berri's dear little feet, has one still more magnificent,—this is the man who made the slipper “*dans un moment d'enthousiasme* ;” and lastly a coiffeur—inexorable fate!

“Sensible et genereux, dont le cœur gouta l'ivresse  
Du bonheur, du genie.” . . . and so forth.

An obelisk of Carrara marble, forty feet high, was about to rise upon the tomb of M. Boulard, “Upholsterer.” He had journeyed himself to Genoa and chosen the marble, and a foundation trench forty feet deep had been dug, and 400,000 francs devoted to the monument; but his heirs have thought proper to depart from the intentions of the testator, and have buried him in a chapel at St. Mandé which he had built himself at the cost of a million of francs. The site of

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his grave here is occupied by the pyramidal monument, with two lateral staircases of fifteen or twenty steps descending to its base, of a rich Portuguese family, Dios Santos.

A Frenchman, who enjoys life so well, is, of all creatures, the least concerned at leaving it. He selects his marble of the finest tints; and has often his coffin made and grave dug in advance. I noticed several open graves, which seemed to me yawning for their victims. They dig a good many a-head, so as to have them on hand, like ready-made coats (without the sleeves) at the mercer's. If a Frenchman buries his wife, he erects her a tomb and one (blanc) for himself, at the side of her. Then frolics out life in wine and good dinners, and has his tomb at Père la Chaise as his box at the opera. He buries his wife too the more splendidly, having a half interest in the concern.

I found myself at length upon a street crowded with most remarkable personages; but so many, that I must put you off as Homer did with his ships. Here was *François Neufchatel*, a minister of the Interior, and author in prose and rhyme, who sung, *tour à tour*, Marie Antoinette and the Republic, who loved Napoleon and the Empire, and rejoiced at the Restoration. In his

vicinity was *Regnaud St. Jean d'Angely*, who used to put off his brass for gold, his words for wisdom, and sometimes, in America, his travelling mistress for his wife.

"Le meme jour a vu finir  
Ses maux, son exil, et sa vie!"

And here too was the stern and philanthropic *Lanjuinais*, who conjured up a devil he could not lay, in the revolution; and the great jurist *Cambacérés*—under Louis XVI. a squire of Montpellier, under the Convention, Citizen *Cambacérés*; Colleague of Bonaparte in the consulate, and President, Duke, Prince, and Marshal of the Empire under Napoleon. The sword sometimes yields to the gown, and the laurel to the toga. He died with all the decorations of Europe about his neck. I would have graven the Code Napoleon upon his tomb. Remember to give him the credit for dissuading the execution of the Duke d'Enghein, the Russian and Spanish campaigns, and the continuation of the war after Dresden. But he never put his honours to the hazard of dissuading any thing very strenuously; like Piso, the Roman, he never differed long in opinion with a "man who had ten legions."

Do let me introduce you to Monsieur *Denon*;



he loved the ladies so, and what is more, the ladies loved him; he first taught us to read hieroglyphics, and brought us news out of Egypt about Pharoah and the Ptolemies, and he brought over that great "Zodiac of Dendera" in the king's library;—and to M. *Messier*, who did not know there was a Revolution in France, being very busy about the revolution of the stars. While his wife was dying, he asked a few minutes' absence to look after a comet. He died himself in looking through a telescope, and his friends had but one eye to close on that occasion. Not a word to *Chénier*, the Jacobin poet; the world has not yet made up its mind about his merits; nor to *Parry*, whose poetry is good enough to deserve your contempt, pure and unqualified. A lyre hangs upon the tomb of *Grétry*, and a globe in flames upon Madame Blanchard.

If I had time, I would inveigh here against the audacity of woman. She kills tyrants, commits suicide, and goes up in balloons. She leaves us nothing, unless going to war, and scarcely that, to characterize our manhood. A Roman Emperor was obliged to forbid her, by an edict, the profession of the gladiators.—I must not pass unnoticed M. *Pinée*, who passed

his life, and with some success, in teaching crazy folks to be reasonable—those in the mad-house. And those two brothers, not less worthy than the best, they who gave eyes to the blind and ears to the dumb, *Haüy* and *Sicard*;—they must not be forgotten; and here is a poor poet (excuse the tautology) who is buried as decently as if he had made sausages.

I will conclude this part of my catalogue, already as long as Lloyd's or Homer's, with a Scotch cousin of mine, Mr. *Justice*. He left his wife, young, amiable, and beautiful as she was, in Edinburgh, for the pleasures of Paris; which pleasures brought him in time to the prison of St. Pelagie. His wife (I will inquire after her health when I go to Scotland) flew to his rescue. She could not procure his enlargement on account of the greatness of his debts, but she stayed with him in the prison, attended him in his illness, and consoled him, and reformed him in his dying moments. She has placed here a modest tomb upon his grave.

If you hear any one speak ill of a woman, have him taken out and fifty lashes given him on my account. I will settle all the costs and damages at the Common Pleas.

We are now upon the summit. This site is

unrivalled in beauty. Montroye, Sèvres, Meudon, Mount Calvary, and St. Cloud, are spread before us in the distant prospect. The eye, too, rests upon the green fields and flowery pastures of Montreuil, and forests of Vincennes ; and at our feet is that great miracle of the world, Paris ; its gilded towers, domes, and palaces, glittering in the sun ; and the frequent hearse is bringing up its daily contribution of the inhabitants. It is near the close of a fine day of autumn. The yellow leaf detached from its branch, comes lingering and flutters towards the earth, and is trodden upon by the passers by ; others on the same branch are yet green, or tinged with the blight of the first frosts.

That Xerxes, in contemplating his multitudinous legions, should weep over the prospect of their mortality, he being on the very errand of killing men, seems to me a notable absurdity ; but that I, who leave them to die just as they please, should weep a little, in a place so favourable to such emotions, would be reasonable enough. While I stood here yesterday and looked down upon this hive of human beings ; listened to the hum of its many voices, and saw the silent earth open to receive all this life and animation : when I looked upon the many graves

of my own countrymen here, and reflected that to-morrow—to-morrow, far from my friends and native country, I might become one of the number! Why, I would have wept outright, if my manhood had not interfered. After all, such feelings were perhaps more remarkable in Xerxes; and Herodotus was right to give him, and not me, credit with posterity. Common passions in common men are not subjects of history; but that the “king of kings,” who challenged mountains, and fettered oceans, and led myriads to slaughter, should yet have his lucid intervals of humanity—this is a matter worthy of record.

This is the choice spot of the cemetery. It is the spot distinguished for the best society. It is covered with the richest array of tombs, and all the arts of statuary, sculpture and architecture have employed their best skill upon its embellishment. It is the aristocracy of the grave. Here are the Peeresses, the Princesses, and High Mightinesses. The rich house of Ormesson, Montausin and Montmorency, and “all the blood of all the Howards,” are upon this Hill. . . “*Ici repose très haute, et très puissante dame, Emma Coglân, Duchesse de Castries;*” and here is the proud mausoleum of Russian Kate’s superb noblewoman, *Madame Demidoff*; which,

although in bad taste, deserves, for its richness, whole days of admiration to itself. Not one of the cleverest of the Parisians is a match for this fur-clad damsel of the Neva. Here, too, is Joseph, the money changer, and other men of arithmetic ; the Barings and the Rothschilds of Père la Chaise, with winged goddesses perched upon their tombs where ought to be Multiplication Tables. And finally ministers and great marshals of France, all who have not been ashamed to come to the term of life according to the due course of mortality, are buried here. Here with images of their living features, upon pyramids that pierce the skies,—

“ Heroes in animated marble frown,  
And legislators seem to think in stone.”

I thought of Washington by the way-side. I thought of Franklin at the corner of Arch and Fifth—in the midst of a city so improved and adorned by his genius, so honoured by his virtues, with no sculpture but the letters of his name, no mausoleum but the grave-digger’s cell.

The monument of Foy is reared by the gratitude of the city of Paris, with almost barbaric magnificence ; “ kings for such a tomb would wish to die.” They have sculptured upon its façade the principal military events of his life

His statue has a majestic and noble air such as becomes the great Deputy, whose eloquence was lightning, and whose tongue was armed with thunder. The countenance is solemn, and the arm outstretched as if to announce some awful admonition.

Other great men, also, have monuments here, pre-eminent in splendour. *Kellerman*, whose name recalls the republican victories of Valmy and Jemappes; *Suchet*, the oldest of the marshals; his ornaments are Rivoli, Zurich, Genoa, Esling. Two winged *Victories* hold a crown over the head of *Lefebvre*, and a serpent, the symbol of immortality twines around his sword; his trophies are Montmirail, Dantzig, the Passage of the Rhine; and next *Jourdan*, *Serrurier*, *Davoust*, and choicer than all, the great Duke of Tarento, the Prince of Eckmuhl, the rapacious *Massena*. How silent! not a footstep is heard of all those who rushed to the battle.

These military men outdo by far, in the splendour of their monuments, all the other classes. —Ceres and Bacchus, on account of the pure, universal and durable benefits they had conferred upon mankind, were raised to the rank of supreme divinities, says Plutarch, but Hercules, and Theseus, and the other heroes were placed

only in the rank of demi-gods, because their services were transitory, and intermixed with the evils of war. The French have reversed this wisdom of the Greeks in Père la Chaise.

But, indeed, if they would snatch a little of their fame from the oblivious grave, there is scarce any other way left; they have so spoilt the trade of glory, by competition. Why, Bonaparte used to send, of these heroes, whole bulletins to Paris weekly; and in Great Britain there are no longer ale-houses, and signposts to hang them upon; Smiths, Auchmuties, Abercrombies, and Wellingtons; — memory has a surfeit of their names. Human veneration is not infinite, and it is expanded till, like the circle upon the stream, it terminates in naught. They who lived before Agamemnon will soon have as good a chance as their successors; Werter will be as good a hero as Cato, and the Red Rover as Lord Nelson.

In the early ages, when events were rare, and men had scarce any thing to do but live their nine hundred years, heroes had some chance to be preserved. They could transmit even their mummied bodies to posterity; but with us, loaded as we are with all this biography, all this history, besides what science and letters

are daily imposing upon us—with us, who come here to Père la Chaise at threescore, to expect such advantage is unreasonable. The truth is, we cannot get along under the accumulated load, and we must sacrifice a part for the safety of the rest of the crew. We must heave a few Massenas and Lord Wellingtons overboard. Ought I not to say a word in this paragraph of the unfortunate Ney? He is buried here, like his fellow martyr, Labedoyere, at the feet of the Suchets. A single cypress is all that grows over the “bravest of the brave!” Read; “*çigit le Marechal Ney, Duc d’Elchingen, Prince de la Moscowa: Decédé! \* \* \* le 7 Decem-ber, 1815.* I humbly take my leave of the Rivolis, and the Wagrams.

Here is a most beautiful tomb of a lady surmounted by an image of Silence, her finger on her lip. Does it intimate the lady could keep a secret? Oh, no, it admonishes other ladies to hold their tongues. This one is *all* French. “*Ici repose Georgina, fille de MADEMOISELLE Mars.*” She adds, *Gardez vos larmes pour sa mère.* Whoever loves Thalia, and the Graces will not disobey the admonition. And now let me introduce you to *Bouffleur*, the *fleur des chevaliers*; to *Delille*, who went down to pos-



terity behind Virgil and Milton ; and to *Bernardin de St. Pierre*, of whom one forgets to remember only Paul and the delicious Virginia. Here, too, is *Laplace*, allotted his six feet like the rest. *Eheu ! Quid prodest ?* and *Fourcroy*, undergoing one of his own experiments. In the centre of all these is *Molière* himself. They should have left room beside him for Miss Mars, his best commentary — if, in spite of time, she should chance ever to die. Here, too, is *Talma*, and *Mademoiselle Raucourt* immortal for feigning others' passions, and *Lafontaine*, for telling other people's tales. He has no occasion to think any thing new, who can dress others' thoughts to such advantage. I observed also a few learned ladies, Madame Guizot, Dufresnoy, and above all, Madame *Cottin*. Are you not sorry she died at twenty-eight, when so many fools never die at all. It is plain, Providence does not trouble itself about what we call human greatness ; or genius would not perish thus in its infancy, and so many glorious and manly enterprises would not die in the hatching. Virgil would have lived till the completion of his *Æneid* ; Apelles would have put the finishing hand upon his *Venus*. I regret that I must pass with only a nod of re-

cognition, Palissot, Mercier, Millevoye, Guinguené, David the painter, and even the elegant, the witty, and profligate Beaumarchais. Who can pass without a sigh the grave of Lavallette? His head was stripped of its hair, and prepared for the guillotine, when he was saved by his wife. Her agitation, and excessive terror lest he should be retaken, affected her brain, and she went mad. Her madness is of a calm and melancholy kind; she sits whole hours in meditation, and has not spoken a word these several years. She is lodged in a *maison de santé* near Paris.

I strolled awhile amongst the "temporary cessations," the graves of the poor. There are no trees here, nor artificial tombs. A border of box-wood, and sometimes a wire wicker work, with a wooden cross, is all their decoration. I read the inscriptions upon the crosses.

—Pierre Robin

Age de 67 ans

Unes des victimes du 28 Juillet, 1830.

By the side in the same wicker enclosure :

Ici repose une victime *inconnu*, du 28 Julliet, 1830.

A little tri-coloured flag was waving between them.

The following is of a mother, upon a child of four years :—

Prés de mourir, elle nous disait: Ne pleure pas,  
Papa; ne pleure pas mamma; je me sens mieux,  
Et elle mourut !

Of a son :

Passant, donne une larme à ma mere, en passant à la tienne.

Of a wife :

Elle vecut bien, elle aima bien, elle mourut bien.

Of an old woman of 81 :

Une jour on dira de moi, ce qu'on a dit des autres;  
Marie Anne Palet est morte, et l'on n'en parlera plus.

This one is pretty :

Pauvre Marie,  
A 29 Ans !

There is a still prettier one of the same kind at New York. "My Mother."

The simple language of the heart succeeds better in epitaphs than the "lettered Muse;" for grief at the dissolution of natural ties is usually more intense amongst the poor than the rich; this is notoriously manifest in the funeral ceremonies of Père la Chaise. How indeed should any lady not rejoice when her lord is dead, if she looks well in black? and my young lord who has popped into an estate and title, how should he be sorry? One ought not, however,

to blame the rich for exhibiting the signs of woe even where the reality is deficient. The affectation of a virtue is better than the neglect of it ; but I would not have it carried to a ridiculous excess. I have heard of a French nobleman here, a M. Brumoi, who, at his mother's death, put his park into mourning ; he craped his deer ; put black fish in his ponds ; and brought from Paris several barrels of ink to supply his *jets d'eaux*. And every one has read of the Danish count, who had his statue placed by the grave of his wife upon a spring, causing the water to spurt through one of the eyes. This statue exists yet near Copenhagen, and is called the "Weeping Eye."—You will often see, amongst the poor of Père la Chaise, a half-grown girl kneeling by the fresh earth after the convoy has departed, or a mother lingering over the grave of her child.

I ascended the hill again by the east side. Only think of walking upon the very earth consecrated so often by the pious footsteps of Madame de Maintenon. It was here she poured out her little peccadillos into the bosom of Père la Chaise. She brought him out from his obscurity of schoolmaster of Lyons, and raised him to the dignity of confessor (some say rival) to

the king. This father was of extraordinary personal beauty, and polished manners. When he had stepped into the graces of the king, he used the royal favour to enrich himself and his order. His style of living was magnificent, his equipages gorgeous, and in his costly banquets he rivalled the most sumptuous monarchs. To gain admission to his soirées was a favour solicited by princes. He was crafty, wily, subtle, and eloquent, says Duclos, and he alarmed or soothed the conscience of the king as best suited his interests. "He surprises his Majesty," says Madame de Maintenon, "into the most boundless liberality, by the mere force of his eloquence." The king pronounced himself, the *éloge* of his confessor at his death in 1709. "He was always," says his Majesty, "of a forgiving temper."

On the site of these tombs, were once his pleasure grounds, and here the proud Jesuit often stood and looked down upon the court and city at his feet. The ruins of his elegant summer palace have perished, but a part of his orchard still remains. I walked up through a low valley, once the channel of a stream that had supplied the water pots, the cascades, and fountains of this reverend father. It is a ro-

mantic spot, but barren of trees and shrubbery. I would plant here the drooping willow, the cypress of hoary gray; and I would teach the jay bird, in its plumage of crape, to build here its nest; and, while ambition climbs the summit of the hill, the tender poets and the unfortunate lovers should come to be buried in this melancholy valley.

It is an advantage of eternity, that one may squander as much as one pleases of it without diminishing the capital. I found that the sun of our world was descending fast upon the roofs of St. Cloud, and I was obliged to run over an acre or two of graves with only a general stare. I hurried about in search of several I had heard distinguished for their splendour, but in vain. There should be a "directory" to tell us where the dead people live. I stumbled at last upon a whole plot of English, coteried apart near the wall side; General Murray; Cochran, brother of the admiral; Caroline Sydney Smith, my lady Campbell, Captain O'Conner, and other august personages. Their tombs are very genteel. An Englishman always seems to me (foolishly perhaps) a greater man than a Frenchman, and a Roman than a Greek, with the same degree of merit. The one, I believe, makes his

wisdom pass for more, the other for less than it is worth. The great polish of the human character diminishes its solidity. Lord Chesterfield would have been a greater man if he had been more an Englishman.

Lord Bacon and Shakspeare both say, that a certain reserve of speech and manner adds to the general opinion of one's merits. The Frenchman wastes, and the Englishman husbands his greatness; the latter hides his little passions, and does small things by deputy. Like Moses, he retires into the mountain, and bids Aaron "speak unto the children of Israel." But the truth is, there is an illusion in my mind at present about all that is English; I have been so long over head and ears in French people. I read over these English graves as a studious school-boy his lesson.

Whilst perusing this page of the great volume, I came with astonishment, not expecting such a rencontre, upon the names of several of our own countrymen, and even of our own townsmen. Of Philadelphia were William Temple Franklin, Adam Seybert, our old congressman and chemist, Samuel Rawlston and Jacob Girard Koch; he who used to "breakfast with the Houris and quaff nectar with Jove at noon." His great

regret, they say, in dying, was an apprehension that there might not be good dinners in the other world. There is here an eloquent and simple tomb upon the grave of Miss Butler, who was cut off in the expectation of unusual accomplishments and in the roseate freshness of her youth.

“Rose, elle a vecu ce que vivent les roses,  
L’espace d’un matin.”——

I remarked, also, the names of K. M. Smith, New York, Harriet Lewis, New London, Frances Morrison, Kentucky, Francina Wilder, and Mrs. Otis of Boston. A cypress is planted by the grave of Dr. Campbell of Tennessee, and some fresh garlands are hung upon its branches. Who is he who has won these pious attentions from the hands of strangers? I am now writing from the inkstand which once belonged to him, and which I will put with my relics. I am lodging in his room, and with the person who attended his fatal illness. She gave me his biography as follows: “He was always good, always polite, and every one loved him;” and then she burst into tears.

The last grave I looked upon, I will now read to you: “Died, March 1st, 1832, Frances Anne,



Countess Colonna de Walewski, daughter of the late John Bulkeley, Esq., of Lisbon, widow of the late General Humphreys, of the United States, minister in Spain and Portugal."—I could write a romance at the foot of this monument. I lingered here until the last glimmerings of day faded, and night covered all but the bleak and snowy marble. I then descended the hill, and with many a solemn reflection, reached my solitary lodge in the Faubourg St. Germain.

Let us reason awhile about the grave. The custom of locating grave yards in cities and towns, so universal in America, has been discontinued in nearly all these old countries of Europe. France has set the excellent example, which has been followed through the continent, and the large towns of England—London, Liverpool, Manchester, Cheltenham, and several others—and all the world acknowledges its necessity. Such a measure was not adopted here until the agency of burying grounds in corrupting the air and producing disease, was proved by numerous examples and experiments.

An account of these, contained in several hundred pages, was published by Maset, secretary to the Academy of Dijon, the one-twentieth part of which would fill with terror all those

who live in dangerous contiguity with a city grave-yard. It is high time your towns in America should give this subject a serious attention. Your grave-yards are multiplying in number and extent prodigiously in the midst of communities which are likely, in a few years, to be numerously increased. Your Pottsville, which is about eight years old, has already six grave-yards, whose population nearly equals that of the village.

All those who die upon the railroads, mines, and canals, for twenty miles around, have themselves carried in and buried in town—as if to be convenient to market. A citizen of Pottsville does consent sometimes to reside in the country during his lifetime, but he does not think it genteel to pass his eternity out of town; and your miner soothes himself with the consolation that though he has many toils and perils in life, he will one day come out of the ground to be buried in Pottsville. It is in their infancy that such evils ought to be averted. They are more easily prevented than cured. And there are enough of other considerations besides health to urge the importance of the subject.

Every body knows the indecent irreverence and general inattention with which grave-yards

are regarded in towns and cities. In many of them monuments are defaced and scribbled on, and the place even desecrated sometimes by the obscenity and brutal violation of visitors. To prevent this, they are often enclosed by high walls and rendered invisible. If the object were to forget one's ancestors there could not be a better contrivance. It is worth while to squander away the best parts of a city to bring one's deceased parents into oblivion or contempt! That this is the case cannot be denied. The citizen, the clergyman, the grave-digger, and the sexton, are all affected by the bones of their ancestors alike.

Who first brought this system of vampyrism into use? It was at least modern. At Babylon they buried the dead in the valley of . . . . look into your Bible; and the valley of Jehoshaphat, I believe, was out of town. The interment of the dead within the precincts of the city was prohibited at Rome by law. The Greeks had the same regulation, and forbade expressly that the temples of the gods should be profaned by the sepulture of the dead. The Achæans buried only one man in town, Aratus—look into your Plutarch. If they had governed our city councils they would have

buried us all out of town, except "Benjamin Franklin, and Deborah his wife." The first Christians followed the Pagans and Jews in this, and for a long time graves were not allowed to encroach upon the sanctuary of the church. But some pious and popular bishop having died in the course of time, I presume they buried him with his church, as they bury an Indian with his canoe; and then another and another, or, perhaps some fat and lazy priest wished to have his dead family about him for the convenience of praying upon them. Who is going all the way to Père la Chaise? So he could just step out in his gown and slippers and dismiss the poor soul to purgatory, and then step back again to his *soupe à la Julien*. And then came avarice to sanction this convenience. We can heap generation upon generation and sell a church-yard over and over again to eternity.

Make me chief burgess of Pottsville, and I will provide a choice piece of ground overlooking the village, and apart from the living habitations—on a single plot, and with separate apartments for the several denominations; and this I will cultivate tastefully with trees and shrubbery, and lay it out with agreeable walks.

I will make the dead an ornament, instead of a nuisance and deformity to the living ; and I will bind your erratic population to the soil, by the decency with which I will bury their fathers and mothers ; and by improving the kindred affections, I will improve, at the same time, the moral and religious feelings of the community. I will carve out, from one of your rugged hills, a decent and solitary retreat, where we may sometimes escape from the business, the anxieties and frivolities of life, and where we may peruse the last sad page of our own history, upon the silent and solemn annals of the grave.

In a place of decent appearance, and of public resort and ample space, we have the means (which we have not in our shabby and contracted grave-yards of the towns) of paying honour to the memory of an eminent citizen, or public benefactor ; a duty in which we are negligent beyond the example of all other nations ; and emulating the princely splendour of Europe in other things, we cannot excuse ourselves upon the republicanism and simplicity of our tastes, in this. Are the virtues of a great man so graven upon our memories, that he needs no other memorial ? And are we all so virtuous,

ourselves and our children, as to need no excitements to emulation?—To do honour to those who have performed eminent service to the community, is as well a commendable policy, as it is an act of justice and gratitude. It produces, in generous minds, a rivalry of honourable actions. It makes one good deed the parent of a numerous offspring. It is the seed of virtue—the grain of corn that rewards the cultivator with a full and ripened ear.

On the other hand, neglect, the cold neglect that is practised in our country, freezes the current of public spirit; and the people, who are guilty of it, need not complain that they are barren of generous actions, or that they, who have been fortunate in acquiring wealth, should choose to spend it rather upon selfish and transitory interests, than upon schemes of permanent public utility. Even our savages pay respectful honours to the dead, and a luxury of grave-yards is of all antiquity; it has even the most ancient scriptural authority in favour of it.—“Thou art a mighty prince, in the *choicest* of our sepulchres bury thy dead.”—(Genesis).

I will now put an end to this long letter, with a few of the French regulations for the inhumation of the dead of cities and towns.

All cemeteries are required to be located without the towns, avoiding low, wet, or confined situations. On an elevated site, the foetid emanations are dispersed by the winds. The dead bodies are to be covered with, at least, four feet of earth, and placed in such a manner that there may be four feet of interval between each, and two feet at the head and foot—about fifty-two square feet for each corpse. It is known, from experiment, that animal decomposition requires about four years, and the grave-yard is to be made four times greater than appears necessary for the number of persons to be interred in it.

The graves are disposed of in perpetuity, or in temporary cessions of six years; the former at twenty-five dollars per metre, of three feet; two metres are required for a grave; and the latter at ten dollars. *These* are disposable anew at the end of the term—the first occupant having the “refusal.” From the extent of the grounds, this has not yet been required. But Death has nearly filled up the whole space, and is looking out for additions to his estate. A miser, who lives next door to him, taking advantage of his necessity, asks, for three-quarters of an acre, twelve thousand dollars!

All the funerals are in the hands of a company, who have their office, keep a registry of the dead, and attend to all their wants. Companies having no souls, the French fulfil the scriptures, and "let the dead bury the dead." Having its stock of carriages, grave-diggers, weepers, and all such things on hand, the company is enabled, they say, to bury cheaper than the individuals themselves. It has, besides, a fixed price for the rich, which enables it to eat an annual dinner, and to bury the poor for nothing. The dinner is, no doubt good, but the burying of the poor, as all things else which are done for nothing in Paris, is performed in a niggardly and heartless manner. If you make any such provision for your new grave-yard of Pottsville, let it honour the hand that confers it. Give the poor man his priest, and apply to a life, perhaps, of unmerited sorrows—a little extreme unction.

The leaves, nipt by the first frosts, are already strewed thick upon the Luxembourg; and your hills are, no doubt, putting on their variegated hues of the autumn. My advice is, that you dissolve the cold, by putting largely of the anthracite upon your grate; that you bring out your old wine, and be joyful, while your knees



are green—see where Père la Chaise stands beckoning from the heights of Mont-Louis.— I give my compliments to the girls, and say you sweet, good night.

## LETTER XIV.

The Louvre.—Patronage of the Fine Arts.—The Luxembourg.—The Palais des Beaux Arts.—The Sèvres Porcelain.—The Gobelins.—Manners of the common People in Paris.—A fair Cicerone.—Her remarks on Painting.—The French, Flemish, and Italian Schools.—English Patronage of Art.—The New National Gallery.—Sir Christopher Wren.—A tender Adieu.

PARIS, Nov. 14th, 1835.

I HAVE passed the morning in the *Louvre*, and have nothing in my head but galleries and pictures; and you must expect nothing else through the whole of this letter. You may dread a long letter too, for you know, the less one is conversant with a subject the more one is likely to reason upon it. In the Louvre, the pictures occupy both walls of a room, thirty feet wide by a quarter of a mile long, and consist of about twelve hundred pieces of native and

foreign artists. In the same building also is the *Musée des Antiques* containing 736 statues, with bronzes and precious vases; also the *Musée des Dessains*, with 25,000 engravings; the *Musée de la Marine*, with models of vessels; and the *Musée Egyptien*, with collections of Egyptian, Roman and Grecian antiquities. An exhibition too is held here, from the first of March till May every year, of the works of living artists, painters, sculptors, engravers, architects, and lithographers.

Paris, in patronising the fine arts, has taken the lead of all the cities of Europe. The government spends annually large sums, and extensive purchases are made by the royal family, and wealthy individuals. They do not hoard their pictures in private houses, as in England, but place them, as in ancient Greece, in the public collections. They improve, therefore, the public taste and embellish their city. It is one of the means by which they entice amongst them rich foreigners, who always pay back with usurious interest the money spent for their entertainment.

There is, besides, a public gallery in the palace of the Luxembourg, which contains collections of paintings and sculpture of living French

artists since 1825. The other museums are those of Natural History at the Garden of Plants, and the *Musée d'Artillerie*, containing all kinds of military weapons, used by the French from the remotest periods of their history; also the "Conservatory of Arts and Trades," where models of every French invention, from a doll-baby to an orrery and steam-engine, have been preserved—the greatest museum of gimcracks, they say, in the world. This gives two courses of gratuitous lectures under distinguished professors, and has a free school in which young men are taught the arts.

To these you may add the "*Palais des Beaux Arts*," begun in 1820, and now near its completion, which is destined to be one of the splendid miracles of Paris. The "Gallery of Architecture," which is already rich, is to be increased with copies of the choice sculpture, statuary, and architecture of all the world, so that students will have no longer to run after the originals into foreign countries.

There are two manufacturing establishments here with galleries of their produce, which have dignity enough to be mentioned even with the Louvre; the Sèvres Porcelain, and the weaving of the Gobelins. In the gallery of the porcelain,

some of the specimens are inconceivable. There was scarcely less difference between mother Eve and the clay that made her than there is between the original materials, and one of these exquisite vases. Gold blushes to see itself outdone by the rude earth at the tables of the Rothschilds and other lords. Plate of the precious metals is mean in comparison. Porcelain has fragility in its favour. The best mine, which sleeps between the Broad and Sharp Mountains would scarce buy you a dinner-set. I priced you breakfast plates at 2,000 francs each, and a table to set them on at 30,000 ; and a vase with American scenery, as if Iris herself had painted it, 35,000. But why, after all, put this exquisite art upon matter so destructible, and upon objects destined to mean services ? Why bake Vandykes upon your cream jugs, and Raffaelles and Angelos on your wash-basin, and the Lord knows what else ? There are things which admit of ornament only to a certain extent.

At the Gobelins the most intricate groups of paintings are interwoven in the carpets and tapestry, of churches and palaces. The great Peter superintending the battle at Pultawa, the Duke d'Epemon carrying off the queen, and St. Stephen pouring out his soul towards Heaven

are all under the shuttle or starting into life, from the woof and chain of a weaver's web. And here is Marie de Medicis, and two other ladies, just out of the loom. The most effeminate tints, the nicest features, have a glow and delicacy equalled but by the best paintings upon canvass. Only think ! the charms of the divinest female ; her arched eye-brows, her lips, like the opening flower, gently parted, as if going to speak ; her graceful smile, which steals away the senses, and all the heaven of her features, may be expressed in wool.

Here are carpets to be trodden on only by queens, and to be purchased only with queens' revenues. One of the cheapest is 8,000 dollars. Two hundred years have been employed upon a single piece. All that you have read about the "weaving of the Dardan Dames," of the webs of Penelope and other ladies, is nothing but mythology. Here is a Bonaparte in the plague of Egypt, so natural and so animate, of such questionable shapes and features, one is almost ready to exclaim with Hamlet, "Be thou a spirit"—(the temptation to a pun is not quite so bad as the offence.) You are tempted almost to speak to him, so full is he of expression and vitality. The workmen of the Gobelines require

six years' apprenticeship, and twenty years to become proficient. Under the ancient government they were locked up for life, like old Dædalus, within the walls, and no one is now permitted to buy or sell without an order of the king. A dyeing establishment is kept up under an able chemist, expressly to supply this factory with colours.

The doors of all the French galleries are opened on certain days of the week to every body, and a special favour of every day is extended to strangers. Minerva, like the others of her sex in Paris, cares not to be rumpled a little by the crowd, or stared at by the vulgar. The rich are refined always sufficiently for their own will and resources; but in the condition of the poor man—his poverty, the contempt which follows poverty, every thing tends to debasement. It is surely then wise in a government to devise such institutions, and encourage such modes and fashions as may ennoble the motives, refine the tastes, and employ innocently the idle hours of the poor; and since one member of a community cannot be badly affected without injury to the rest, it is the proper business of the rich to second such measures of policy. It is certain that no city in the world contains so

many violent principles of corruption as Paris, and it is equally certain that the common people have an air of neatness and decency, not equalled by the same class in any other country. As for grace, it is here (and it is no where else) a mere bourgeois and plebeian quality. The distinction too is as remarkable in conversation as in manners. There is not a milliner or shop-girl at fifteen sous a-day, whose head is not a little museum of pictures; she will converse with you too of the Malibrans, and Taglionis, and Scribes, with nearly the same sense and the same phraseology as the *Journal des Spectacles*. But the Frenchman seeks his recreation in the dance, the theatre, in the pure air of his gardens, and in these galleries of statues and paintings, whilst the Englishman skulks into his gin-shop. No one can walk into these galleries on the public days, and not see, that there is in man a natural attraction for the arts which exalt and refine his nature. We follow our mother country in many things, and we follow her especially in her whims and her vices. She shuts out the public from her pictures, and then complains that there is no public taste. And she imports her Lelys and Godfrey Knellers from abroad. We have a gallery in Philadelphia, and though there is but



one picture in it, the admission to this one picture is a shilling sterling. It is the "Last Supper;" and we have puffed in all the newspapers the religious impressions which it inspires (for a shilling.) I ask pardon of the "Academy of Fine Arts;" it also has pictures, which are visited by fashionable people once a-year, admission twenty-five cents.

The ancients set more value upon this silent kind of instruction than we moderns. A Spartan mother rocked her baby in a shield, and she dressed the household gods in armour, that her little Leonidas might have the image of war before his eyes, even in his prayers. She even commenced this course of education before the child's birth. For she took care to have bucklers and helmets, and portraits of Castor and Pollux, and other heroes, hung around her chamber, and to have some martial air played over her couch of a morning, that she might not, by pusillanimous dreams, spoil her child. The "city councils" too of that country, employed certain grave old men, good for nothing else, to inspect the public morals, and especially to take care that the recreations of the youth should be public. In a word, they thought it better, by such impressions and such vigilance, to antici-

pate the dispositions of men to be bad, than to build "Houses of Refuge," and "Penitentiaries" to correct them.

We prefer to connive at the opportunity of sin, till men have become rogues, and then hang them. But, to take the example of a people nearer our own manners, there can be no doubt that the excellent specimens of the Fine Arts, exhibited daily to the Athenians in the embellishment of their city, with the pomp of their games and festivals, gave them that exquisite taste, that grace of movement, language, dress and manner, in which they had an acknowledged superiority over all other people in the world.

To enter the Louvre this morning, I used the stranger's privilege; and unfolding my passport, a lady, with so much the air of a lady, as to be sure of meeting no repulse, taking my arm, said, "Sir, I will ask the favour of going in with you. I will be your wife two minutes," and we went in together. A Frenchwoman says and does things sometimes at which our American honour grows very indignant, yet does she say and do no harm. In conversing with this woman, I did not doubt "two minutes" of her being of the best breeding and education. She had resided at Florence, and a long time at Rome, and had

exactly that kind of information which the necessities of my condition required. I entreated her of course not to be divorced at the end of the "minutes." She has wit and learning, and is eloquent to the very ends of her fingers. Her personal beauty, too, is of no common order, but just threatening to fade; the period at which woman, to my taste, is much more interesting than with the full blown charms of seventeen summers in her face. She has then the interest of a possession which soon may escape; she has maturity of intelligence, of feeling and expression, to which the brilliancy of youthful beauty is as the tinsel to the pure gold.

The Louvre has nine divisions, bounded each by an arch resting on four Corinthian columns, and pilasters of beautiful marble, having bases and capitals of bronze-gilt; and between them are mirrors, and splendid ancient and modern vases and busts. Three of these parts are assigned to the French, three to the German, Flemish, and Dutch, and as many to the Italian and Spanish masters. I walked with my amiable *virtuosa* up and down this enchanting gallery for an hour; gathering wisdom, not being allowed to gather any thing else, from her lips.

And we conversed, not of politics, or the town scandal, but of what it imported me more to know, of Florence, and of the treasures of that city of the arts—of Florence, the birth-place of Dante, of Galileo, of Machiavelli, of Michael Angelo; and we conversed of those two great patrons of Florentine learning, Cosmo and Lorenzo de Medici,—how the arts revived under their care, and flourished under their munificent protection, and how much more one man often does towards the glory and honour of a country, than ten thousand of his neighbours. And so we walked, and then stood still, and looked up, to the great fatigue of our legs, a contingency which the French foreseeing, had provided against by placing sofas along each side the room, and in front of the finest paintings; so down we sat opposite the “French School.”

Here I put the lady back to her rudiments, and I am going to give you a tincture of her remarks. Before coming to this country I had seen neither statues nor pictures. I had seen only Miss “Liberty,” on the bow of an East Indiaman, and a General Washington or two, hospitably inviting one to put up for the night. In a word I had studied only in that great National

Gallery of ours, the sign-posts. So the less I say of my own wit upon this subject, the better.

“To improve your taste, sir, in painting, it is not the best way to dissipate your attention upon all this variety. Select a few pieces of the best and study these alone, for an hour a day, until by comparison you can distinguish their beauties, with the style and character of each master. You will then be able to read with satisfaction through the rest of the great volume; you will know what to receive, what to reject, and how to economise your time and attention. Here are the French masters. It was under Louis XIV., and with Poussin, this school began. The great number of pictures at this time brought to Paris and exhibited publicly gave a general taste for the art; and we have attained since a very eminent distinction, without, however, reaching the great masters of the Flemish and Italian schools. We have all the dry particulars of excellence, such as the labour of copying the fine classical models may produce. All schools, under the authority of a master, lead off from nature, to imitation—to a mean practice of mere copying, which fetters and debases genius.

“How much better to have open galleries, as

the ancient Greeks, untrammelled; where the mind may follow its own impulses, and recommend itself at once to the great tribunal, before which all human excellence must come at last for its recompense and fame. Hogarth, Reynolds, Wilson, and West, were all eminent before the birth of the Royal Academy, and who does not know that Reynolds would have been more eminent still, if he had not been thrust into its Presidency? Raphael never read a treatise or heard a lecture on his art. All the great painters under Leo X. were of no school; they were fostered by individuals and the public, and all the efforts of the academy of St. Luke have not been able to continue the race. When painting shows her face in your country, be wise, and do not cramp her natural movements by the trammels of an academy.

“In this French school you must admire the life, the movement, the variety of *Lebrun*; the serene and noble expression, the correct, yet grand and heroic style of the classical *Poussin*; and him, whose landscapes, and tableaux contend for superiority, *Claude Lorraine*; especially the trees, suns, moons, and lightning of his beautiful landscapes; the fine sea pieces too, and landscapes of *Vernet*; and *Lemoine*, immortal

for his Hercules. This last died of melancholy from the neglect of his patron and the envy of his rivals. The next time we meet, I shall hear you all day praise the grace and sentiment of *Le Sueur*, and the more animated grace of *Mignard*; you will have adored his cupola of Val-de-Grace, and his virgins, too, and above all his St. Cecilia, celebrated so magnificently by Molière.

“ See what a different world !—The phlegmatic and laborious Hollander. This is nature, as it is in Amsterdam, fat, Dutch nature; wrought out to a neat and prudish perfection, to be accomplished only by Dutch patience, admirable in animals, fruits, flowers, insects, night-scenes, vessels, machines, and all the objects of commerce and arts; admirable, too, in perspective; its clara obscura is magic, it paints the very light of heaven; the shades in nature’s self are not better blended. Don’t you love this shop; this peasant’s kitchen; and the grotesque dresses, and comic expression of these figures? All, as you see, in this school have the same face; the artist has no idea of a connection between faces and minds. Scipio is a Dutch burgomaster.

“ Here are Alexander and Diogenes; either in

the tub will do for the philosopher; both are Dutchmen. But what harmony of colours; what living carnations; what relief; what truth and character!—these are *Rembrandt's*, and even these want spirit and dignity. Let us sit down here and take a long look at *Rubens*, the Titian, the Raphael of the Low Countries—of the singular beauty of his heads, his light and easy pencil; the life, harmony and truth of all his compositions. The whole world goes to Anvers, alone, to see the works of this extraordinary genius; to see his “Crucifixion,” you would go any where; you can hear his thief scream upon the cross. And here is *Jordaens*, almost his equal, and the portraits, never, to be surpassed, of *Vandyke*. Here, too, the inimitable village fêtes, and grotesque peasantry, and soldiers of *Teniers*; the landscapes and farms, and cattle of *Potter*; and *Van-der-meer's* sheep, as natural as those which feed upon the down.—These last, of nearly the same character, are the Germans, *Durer*, *Holbein*, and *Kneller*.

“And now the divine Italy. The noble Florentines; *Michael Angelo* and *Vinci* at their head;—the fruitful, the lively, the imaginative, the graceful, the majestic, and every other ex-



cellence combined. If you love the arts you will live always in Florence. There is nothing here of Angelo, but this is the *Joconde* of Vinci, the most finished portrait in the world.

“Next is Lombardy, and her fine forms and expression; her masterly composition, and colours, so sweetly blended; all the best qualities of “excelling nature” are in this school formed by *Correggio*, who received, they say, his pencil from the Graces. His drapery seems agitated by the winds. And who are these others, who divide equally with him the admiration of the world? you cannot remove your eyes from their charming figures—it is *Permessan* and the *Caraccis*, severe and correct; and he who excels them all three in some of the principal features of the art, he who paints nature in her defects, and with irresistible force and truth, *Caravaggio*; and next *Guido*, who paints her majesty and graces; and *Albano*, in her winning, and poetic enchantments; and *Domenichino*, whose obstinate genius dragged him to the very heights of Parnassus, in spite of the predictions of his masters.

“In the Roman School, founded upon the antique models, you will have an inexhaustible source of enjoyment. Who does not love *Ra-*

*phael*; his works are as well known as Virgil's. Who can admire enough the natural expression and attitude of his figures, and his composition, simple and sublime. Here are *Titian's* lively portraits, and landscapes, never to be surpassed in force and boldness of colouring. And here is the fruitful, and lively, and dignified *Paul Veronese*, with his brilliant, various and magnificent draperies. His "Marriage of Cana," is one of the chef-d'œuvres of Italy. And here are tableaux and landscapes by the wild fancy of *Salvator Rosa*, excelling in savage nature; who paints the arid plain and carnage of the battle as no one else. In America, he would have painted your Mississippi, where its mighty flood rolls through the silent wilderness, or your War Dance; or the Hut of the Woodman, where the panther looks through his window, and the rattlesnake coils upon his pillow, or the savage upon his lonely cliff; while surveying the firmament, he reads God's Holy Scriptures in the skies.

"—— Of this the composition is perfect; the passions are violent, but natural, and without disagreeable distortion, and the drapery even beyond ideal perfection.—The figures have less majesty than Michael Angelo's, and are more

within our common nature.—His women, as you see, are too plump, and his children too grave, whose is it?

“—— And this exquisite woman? with no sins of her ancestors in her face, and none of their diseases and deformities in her limbs; with all the sweet sensibilities, as the colours of the rainbow, in her expression—Who is she?—Who gathered these fugitive charms into her features, and who this divine grace about her limbs, to play upon her tapering arms, and neck and bosom, as the soft moonlight upon the stream?—Who made her? \* \*

“—— All these eminent beauties, and this dove-like innocence to be thrown away, as the fragrance of the wild rose upon a desert; no taste to value; no \* \*

\* \* \* To be sure, her unforbidden husband!  
\* \* \* This other figure of the same canvass you will no doubt easily recognise. \* \*

“—— It is no wonder; it is a bad likeness. It should have less of the terrific attributes. Cloven feet and horns are the stupid imaginations of the monks. Without the temptations to sin what exercise or opportunity is there in virtue? What becomes of human greatness—of honesty, piety, charity, continence and all

that props up the dignity of our race?—To be well painted he should have nothing of a supernatural being; he should have human passions to enlist human sympathies. He should be a gentleman; a gentleman too in his most seducing and fascinating form. With such a nature only he can sustain the functions assigned to him by Providence, especially amongst women; and to corrupt the world you must begin by them.

“There is here, as you see, no *Ecole Britannique*. The English have given us nothing in return for our Claudes and Poussins. Yet England does not yield to any nation of Europe, in the munificence of her patronage. One of her dukes pays for a picture of West’s 3,000 guineas; another buys “Murillo’s” at half a million in a year. Walpole’s collection at Houghton was valued at 200,000 pounds sterling. And she has not only invited the arts from foreign countries, by sumptuous presents, but has pensioned them, given them degrees in the universities, knighted them, and married them with her proudest nobility. Some pretend that she wants the lively and quick sensibilities necessary to success in this art; that she raises

paintings, as the fruit of the Indies, not natural to her climate. But the climate of Rubens, Vandyke and Rembrandt is quite as Boeotian as that of Great Britain. Who ever heard of the sensibilities of the Hollander? The atmosphere, which nourished a Milton, would not have smothered a Raphael, or a Michael Angelo; nor would Salvator Rosa have withered, where Shakspeare 'warbled his native wood-notes wild.'

"One of the great stimulants to excellence has been wanting in England altogether, and is now weakened throughout Europe — the wealth, the influence, the enthusiasm of the Catholic Religion. This spirit which, like the mythology of the Greeks, put a God in every niche of the Temple; which produced the Angelos and Rubens, and breathed inspiration into the artist and spectator, is quenched. Your Presbyterian prejudices of the impressions produced by paintings, as well as by architecture and music, are now obsolete. Idolatry is to be feared only among a savage or very ignorant people. We have got beyond these limits; and a picture of the Saviour or the Virgin can have no worse effect now in a

church, than the picture of a father or mother in the habitation of their children.

“England will have a school of paintings, when she will have public galleries and a public taste, when the artist shall hold the reins of his imagination in his own hands, and shall paint, not for private recompense, but public fame, and not for the Duke of Sutherland, but the nation. In portraits, where vanity supplies a public taste, England excels; and the engraver, who ministers to the common pride, and supplies the furniture of the parlour, and the lady’s Annual, succeeds as no where else. Vandyke, who painted the “Descent from the Cross,” in his own country, painted in England only portraits; as affording him a better remuneration than his exertions on historical subjects.

“These seven pieces every one admires for their mellow colouring, and for their bold and vigorous expression — they are of the Spaniard *Murillo*. With these, I beg leave to close my lecture, and to thank you for your amiable and patient attention.”

Now this is the end of the Louvre—Are you not glad? — To designate by single epithets persons, who have a hundred qualities, is too

absurd ; but to seem to know something about paintings, is so very genteel !

As you cross the *Pont des Arts*, you will see, placed in its centre, a bench to accommodate wearied travellers. You may now fancy me seated—long enough, at least, to fill the rest of this page—upon this bench. The breezes here fan you with their little wings, and the landscape is covered with delightful images. The Seine flows under your feet so smooth, you can count the stars on its surface. It is arched by seventeen sumptuous bridges, many of them in sight ; and the dwellings of luxurious men, and the temples of the Divinity, vie with each other in magnificence, upon its banks, and the steeples stand tip-toe upon the neighbouring hills.

“ The correspondence of the architecture is not accidental. You must look at Paris as a picture, and examine the composition, as well as the execution of the parts. Its monuments are not only beautiful in themselves, but are made, as you see, to harmonise with each other. The Louvre, the Institute, the Arch of Neuilly, the Tuileries and its gardens, the Madeleine, the Palais Bourbon, the Seine and all its turretted castles—all are but parts of the same

tableau. In this respect Paris, so inferior to London in wealth, and to Rome in situation, is yet more beautiful than either. St. Paul's harmonises with nothing—Westminster Abbey, also, is lost in its individuality. The "New Gallery" occupies one of the best situations in Europe, only cumbering the ground, which the taste of a better age might have employed to the ornament of the city. London monuments are built as at Thebes, *au son du Tambour*; they are built for the job, and ours for the honour of Paris and posterity. The Madeleine, yet under the architect, was begun sixty years ago; St. Paul's was built by the same architect, and the same mason. Sir Christopher Wren was employed upon it, at two hundred a-year, and had a suit at law for a few half-pence, which stood unpaid upon his bill.

"This '*Palais des Beaux Arts*' is now the Palace of the Institute. As it stands at the head of our fine arts, as well as letters, I may as well tell you the little I know of its organization. It is the old *Académie Française*, expanded from forty to several hundred members. They are separated into four divisions; having only the hall and library in common; and their common funds are managed by a joint com-



mittee from each; and they have a united meeting yearly, on the 1st of May. The vacancies are filled by ballot of the members, with the approbation of the king. Each member receives an annual salary of 1500 francs, except honorary members, who are contented with the honours.

"The '*Academie des Beaux Arts*' distributes prizes in painting, sculpture, architecture, engraving, and musical composition; and the successful candidates pursue their studies at Rome at the expense of the state. The '*Academie des Belles Lettres*' gives also a prize of 1500 francs, and medals for the best memoir on French antiquities. The '*Academie des Sciences*' awards a prize of 3000 francs, on a subject given, and smaller prizes upon specific branches of science; and finally, the *Academie Française*, upon a proposed subject, pays a prize of 1500 francs, and some of smaller amount. One called the '*Montyon Prize*,' for some act of virtue in the common class of society."

Here my fair cicerone slipped through my fingers—not indeed without an effort on my part to hold her fast. I threatened her not to survive.

“ Yes, do; and you can put in for the Montyon prize of this year. We are just under the tower of Philip Augustus, so the end like the beginning of our acquaintance will have something of romance.—Oh, no, my name would spoil all the interest of the plot; what is a plot without a mystery?”

“ A romance beginning with a marriage, has usually a tragical end.”

“ And so end the best romances—where could you find for the catastrophe a more desirable place?—Here stood the *Tour de Nesle* of tragical memory, and you have in view the Pont Neuf, and there is the Morgue.”

“ It is a pity,” said I in a pique, “ that nature had not taken some of the pains she has lavished upon your brains and your beauty, to give to your heart. You see a stranger, never before a traveller, wandering in your country——”

“ A stranger never before a traveller is not to my taste. Such a traveller’s views of human nature are very narrow. He judges of merit always by some mode or fashion of his own, and sets up his whims as the standard of propriety for others. One who has travelled does not think a fellow-creature bad because she

may deviate from the little etiquette of his native village. He does not think any thing wrong that is not so essentially. If he should meet for example, a lady, an entire stranger, who would ask his arm, to see these fine pictures of the Louvre; in the alternative of remaining out of doors, and should choose, in return for his politeness, to be entertained an hour with his company, he would not infer that she wanted either sense or good breeding; he would not presume, on such appearances, to treat her with less respect—much less ——”

I dropped the hand I had taken without her leave. She then returned it, and bade me adieu, crossing the bridge and traversing the *Quai de La Monnaie*, where she disappeared among the narrow lanes of St. Germain—and there was an end of her.

I intended in setting out to give you the cream of her conversation, but it turns out to be the skim-milk only, and I have no time for revision. There is nothing so insipid and creamless as the fine things people say to one's self, and especially the fine things one says in reply.

This, with a little package of music, will be handed you by Mr. D——, who is going to accompany it all the way himself. The obliging

man ! Please to give him your thanks ; and to his prettiest little wife in the world, a thousand compliments from your very devoted humble servant.

## LETTER XV.

The Schools.—State of Literature.—Minister of Public Instruction.—Education in France.—Prussian System.—Parochial Schools.—Normal Schools.—Institutions of Paris.—Public Libraries.—Machinery of French Justice.—The Judges.—Eloquence of the Bar.—Medicine.—Corporations of Learning.—Their Evils.—The French Institute.—Pretended New System of Instruction.—Professors of Paris.

Paris, November 20th, 1835.

ONE of the eminent merits of the French character is the distinction they bestow upon letters. A literary reputation is, at once, a passport to the first respect in private life, and to the first honours in the state. In Paris it gives the tone, which it does nowhere else, to fashionable society. It is not that Paris loves money less than other cities, but she loves learning more; and that titled rank being curtailed of its natu-

ral influence, learning has taken the advance, and now travels on in the highway to distinction and preferment, without a patron, and without a rival. At the side of him, whose blood has circulated through fifty generations, or has stood in the van of as many battles, is the author of a French History, born without a father or mother.

Who is Guizot, and who Villemain, Cousin, Collard, Arago, Lamartine, that they should be set up at the head of one of the first nations in Europe? Newspaper editors, schoolmasters, astronomers, and poets, who have thrust the purpled nobles, and time-honoured patricians from the market of public honours, and have sat down quietly in their seats. The same marks of literary supremacy are seen through every feature of the community. Who was at Madame Recamier's last night? Chateaubriand; and at the Duchesse d'Abrantes? Chateaubriand. —At the Pantheon, the whole nave of the Temple is assigned to two literary men; and the Prince of Eckmuhl, and such like, are crammed into the cellar. At Père la Chaise, David wears the cross of St. Louis, by the side of Massena. Molière is the only author in the world since the Greeks, whose birth-day is a national festival. His statue is crowned on that day at the Theatre

Français, and his plays are represented, by order of government, upon all the national theatres. We ought then to presume that the literary and scientific institutions of the French should correspond with this sentiment in favour of learning; and so they do.

Here are two sheets of large post, which I must try to fill with this subject. I say *try*, because I write in obedience to your orders, and in total defiance of inclination. This will be the only letter I have written since I came here, to any of your bearded sex, and I feel already very grave and dull. Not that I think ladies more frivolous than men, or men more stupid than ladies, but it is my humour. I can write to my lady acquaintance without thinking, which I esteem a special favour, during my residence in Paris.—They do not expect me to be wise, and what extravagant notions you may have on this subject I don't know.—If I write you nothing but what you know already, it will not be my fault, for I am unacquainted with the extent of your information, and you have not been specific in your inquiries.

The authority which presides over the Public Instruction in France, is personified under the term "University," at the head of which is a

minister, who has a salary of twenty thousand dollars, and a rank with the other ministers. A "Central Board" of nine members, has a general superintendence of the studies, and expense of the establishments. The divisions of the kingdom for the "Royal Courts," are the school districts, which are called Academies; these have each a "Governor," representing the minister, and an "Academical Board," the Central Board at Paris; and each has its establishments, which are the Faculties, the Royal and Communal Colleges, Primary Schools, and Private Institutions. The Instruction is Superior, Secondary, and Primary. ♥

The "Faculties" teach theology, law, medicine, science, and letters. They confer degrees of Bachelor, Licentiate, and Doctor; and are thirty-five in number. Three are Medical Faculties, at Paris, Montpellier and Strasburg; eight are Theological; of the Catholic Religion, six; of the Protestant, two; and nine are Faculties of Law. There are thirty Royal, three hundred and twenty Communal; and two Private Colleges; one hundred and twenty Private Institutions, or Boarding Schools, and one thousand and twenty-five Select Private Schools. The studies of these are Philosophy,



Natural History, Elementary Mathematics, Latin, Greek, and modern languages.

The Primary Schools embrace only reading, arithmetic, and writing: and the "Primary Superior" add history, geography, elements of chemistry, and surveying. Their number about fifty thousand.

At Paris there is a "Normal School," for the education of Professors; and throughout the kingdom about sixty for masters of the Primary Schools.

The minister is appointed by the king, and the other officers directly, or indirectly by him. There are thirty General Inspectors, two for each academy or district. The "Proviseurs" have a care of the household and conduct of the students, and "Censors" superintend studies. Teachers are selected at a distance from their own departments, so that no local interests may grow up against the great central authority. Private institutions are forbidden to teach any thing else than grammar, elements of arithmetic, and geometry. Reports from the Academical Boards are examined twice a-week by the Central Board of the University, and the University presents a report every two years, to the Chamber of Deputies.

Education in France is a universal and unfringible monopoly, and has the benefits and evils of such systems. The Central Board establishes uniformity in books, and instruction; it decides whether you are to teach your son pot-hooks, or straight strokes; but it impedes also improvement in the school-books, and processes of teaching; it selects competent instructors, but it represses the exercise of ingenuity by prescribing their duties; it cuts up the Lancasters, the Fellenbergs, and Pestalozzis by the roots. I say nothing of the independence of mind, without which there is neither genius, nor virtue, which is repressed by so absolute an authority. It suppresses also imposture in the teachers, but it destroys, too, the spirit of competition which imparts life and vigour to all human employments. It does not suppress the jobbing which arises out of all government projects, or intrigue, or favouritism in the appointment of its officers.

This is the system lately engrafted upon the great Prussian plan, which it is the fashion to praise so much about in the world. Time will perhaps reveal its merits; but this is by no means certain. There are other causes at work for the diffusion of knowledge amongst the people, and it is so easy to ascribe the merit to the

Prussians; besides, it is not likely that, once used to receive instruction from their magistrates, as it were, for nothing, the people should consent to educate themselves at their own cost; or that, seeing for a long time effects produced by a certain machinery, especially so remote from their causes, they should conceive them producible by any other.

I have looked at the working of this plan in Paris and several of the neighbouring towns, and am sorry that I cannot share in the flattering hopes entertained of its results. Burke lays it down as "one of the finest problems of legislation" to know "what the state ought to undertake to direct by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual discretion." "All governments," he observes, "fall into the error of legislating too much." I have no good hopes of any system of education under the management of a government.

Nothing is so badly managed as a government itself all over the world; and to have as little as possible of it seems to me the perfection of social economy. The rich and middling classes will take care of their own children always, and no one, I presume, will say that

they will not do it better under the impulse of parental feeling than they who act only from delegated authority. Why do we not put the cultivation of the earth under the management of a company? A parent, being able, feels as strong a necessity to educate his son as to cultivate his field. To the parent only, who is destitute, and to whom there is but the alternative of a bad system or none; to him only whose instincts are frozen by necessity, should the sceptre of legislation be extended—extended as medicine to the health, with prudence, and only when the native vigour is irrecoverable by the natural stimulus. You cannot by any human device prevent the division of the poor and rich into different schools; they do not attempt it even in arbitrary Prussia. And it is better the government, with its broad shoulders, than individuals, should make the distinction.

Under a general system the two parties mutually prejudice each other. On the one hand, the current of private charity, so fruitful in its natural channel, is dried up by it. A community of which the individuals give cheerfully; one the timber, another the stone, another his personal services, towards a building, will, under a public system, require to be paid for their smallest con-

tributions ; and how many rich legacies have we inherited in Philadelphia, not a dollar of which would have been given under a public system. On the other hand, how many communities through the country, able to support good private schools, without the intermeddling of the government, have no longer the ability, and are obliged either to send their children abroad, or place them, with a total disregard of their morals and education, in a public school, where sixty scholars are taught by an old gentleman of sixty. It is easy to imagine what sort of schools are those in which the teacher receives, as in New England, twenty, or as in Pennsylvania, thirty dollars a month, for this wide diffusion of his services.

The Scotch have been putting this forty-pound-a-year system to the test these two hundred years in their Parochial Schools, and with the most tender nursing, their schools are in the same puny and rickety condition as at their seven months' birth. The Scotch are a persevering people, and if they begin by building a house at the roof, they keep building on even after the inutility of their labours has been demonstrated. So the turkeys in your Schuylkill county, their eggs being removed,

and stones substituted, continue hatching on as usual. The Yankees, a shrewder people, are beginning to find out that their school system, copied from the Scotch, notwithstanding the care with which they starve their teachers, is actually getting worse every year. I have no objection to the government giving money, the more, the better, but I have no hesitation in saying that it will serve no useful purpose unless the relation between parent and teacher is preserved, and the executive department left to their management. In this delicate concern, the arm of the government should be concealed; her virtues should be busy without noise.

If I were the state; if I owned, for example, your community of Pottsville, I would contribute all I could towards buildings, apparatus, and libraries, and circulating useful books, and above all towards elevating the character and acquirements of the teachers. I would devise some way, by a succession of honours and profits, to make men teach, as in the army they make them fight. For instance, I would pay a per centage, up to a certain number of pupils, to each school; and the teacher with ten years' approved services should receive a state diploma and the title of professor; thirty years'

services should entitle him to half pay, and I would take care of his wife and children at his decease. I would not encourage universities but for the advanced age of the pupils, and the transcendant branches; so as to give them a higher character, and leave the field of general instruction open to the common teachers, and to a fair and equal competition of abilities. Thus I should find abundant means of employing all my school funds; and this without the Inspectors, Censors, Provisours, and the other expensive apparatus of the "*Bureau Central de Paris*."

If any one of the honourable and useful departments of a state is filled with an inferior class of men, it shows a defect in the policy of such a state. If I wished to devise some means the most direct, to degrade the character of a teacher, I could not hit upon one more efficacious than this French and Prussian system. All that the Prussian receives to console his condition of absolute dependence, is two hundred dollars per annum; the highest professor at the gymnasium, receives five hundred. With this "appointment" he must be all school-master, without any alloy of gentleman about him. It is certain that not any of the respect-

able literary circles of Europe will receive this working man of the Muses into their society.

The Prussians are not addicted to commerce; nor do they read newspapers, nor meddle with the state; their habits are quiet and agricultural; and they care much less about the heads of their children, than that their cabbages may have good heads for *sour crout*. If not educated by the government, they would, no doubt, remain ignorant of letters. The Prussian system may, then, be a very good system for Prussia; but it is not, therefore, necessary or applicable to the United States;—except it be to our German nests of Pennsylvania; but these are melting away, and will soon be lost in the general improvements of the state.

A part of this system are the Normal Schools, which we are trying, also, to introduce into New England. They seem to me of little value, for they can teach but little that is not taught in any other place of education; besides, under present circumstances, they defeat their own purpose. A good school for educating teachers in America, would, perhaps, be the very best place one could imagine to disqualify men for teaching. I know the trustees of the "Girard College" think otherwise, and entertain san-



guine hopes of supplying the whole country with eminent teachers from that institution. I do not see the reasonableness of their hopes; unless we may suppose that the young gentlemen of talent, out of gratitude, will forego the opportunities they may have of wealth and distinction in other professions, to starve themselves for the benefit of the state of Pennsylvania.

Several writers here express fears that this monopoly of education may be turned to the prejudice of liberty; which I believe to be a vain apprehension. The teachers being laymen, it is certain it will not be turned to the profit of the hierarchy. The French literature, which finds its way into every country of Europe, is a complete code of ridicule of the priesthood and nobility; and the more people are taught to read, the more difficult will be the re-establishment of these two orders. Public opinion is but little modified by the books and lectures of the schools; and the minister's authority, however absolute in the University of Paris, will be but little felt, if in contradiction with that greater university—the world. The studies of the schools are forced upon unripe and unwilling minds; those of society are

voluntary, and introduced as reason is developed. Besides, it is human nature to relish most that which is most prohibited. Nothing ever brought the works dangerous to religion more into reputation, than the denunciations of the clergy. In crimes and errors, one cannot cure the patient, by starving and checking perspiration. It happens, too, that the French books, which are most replenished with wit and genius, are precisely those which are most obnoxious. It is true, however unfortunate, that education, liberty, and irreligion are sown here in the same soil, and grow together under the same cultivation. To preserve the French student from the contagion of principles dangerous to the aristocratic and clerical institutions, he must be forbidden the whole of the national classics down to Lafontaine's Fables, including the history of his country—I was going to say, the company of his father and mother, and his schoolmasters.

I must now give you an account of the particular institutions of Paris. You have your choice of five royal colleges; "*Louis le Grand*," "*Henri IV.*," and "*St. Louis*," which receive boarders and externs; and "*Charlemagne*," and "*Bourbon*," externs only. The average num-

bér of pupils for each is about a thousand. The studies are ancient and modern languages, mathematics, chemistry, natural philosophy, natural history, geography, penmanship, and drawing. They are superintended by a "Pro-viseur" and a "Directeur General des Etudes." In August, there is a general competition for prizes, between a few pupils selected from each college, conducted with pomp before the heads of the universities, and other dignitaries of the city. A subject is given, the competitors are locked up, and a council of the university decides, and the names of the successful students, and the schools to which they belong, are published in the journals; which excites a wonderful emulation amongst fifty, and a wonderful jealousy and discontent amongst five hundred; and many get prizes on these days who get nothing else all the rest of their lives.

The price of boarding and instruction is about 220 dollars per annum. There are besides these, and of the same character, "*St. Barbe* or *Rollin*," and "*Stanislaus*," two private colleges. There are in the city, and under the inspection of the university, 116 academies for gentlemen, and 143 for ladies; and a great number of primary schools, in which about 10,000 child-

ren are taught gratuitously or for a small price; the boys by the "*Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne*," and the girls by the "*Sisters of Charity*," or nearly the half by the "*Frères Ignorantins*," who profess reading and writing only, with the catechism; any one having higher attainments being disqualified. There are schools also for the blind and dumb.

This machinery of schools, or something equivalent, exists in other countries, but the Parisians have two institutions, which they regard as choice and pre-eminent. Science, which is elsewhere immured in the cloisters of the universities, here breathes the wholesome and ventilated air of social life. "Wisdom uttereth her voice in the market-place; she crieth aloud in the streets." These are the "*Academie de Paris*," and the "*College Royal de France*." Every branch of human knowledge has here its professors, and the doors of the temple are open to the needy of all nations. In the former, which you will find on the "*Place Sorbonne*," are Faculties of Theology with six professors; of Letters with twelve; and Science, twelve.

It is the theatre upon which Guizot, Cousin, Villemain, and others acquired their professorial celebrity—a noble theatre for the encourage-

ment, exercise, and reward of eminent abilities. The Faculties of Law and Medicine are held each in separate buildings. The "*College de France*" has twenty-one professors, who give lectures on all the higher branches of science and letters; also upon the Hebrew, Chaldaic, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and Italian languages. There is besides a Special Royal school for Oriental Languages, to which the government allows annually 3600 dollars. The salaries of professors in these schools seldom exceed 1200 dollars; a pension is given after twenty years' services.—Besides these, they have the "*Ecole Polytechnique*," with three hundred scholars, from sixteen to twenty years: twenty-four at the expense of government; the charges of the others 200 dollars a-year. In connection with this is the "*Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées*," in which eighty of the pupils are instructed specially in the arts of projecting, and constructing roads, canals, &c.

There is a school for Astronomy at the Observatory; also, a "School of Mines," with an extensive cabinet and lectures, and a "School of Pharmacy," with a botanic garden. This gives a diploma and licence to practice to Apothecaries.—There is a gratuitous school of

Mathematics and Drawing, and one of Drawing for ladies, and two courses of lectures at the Garden of Plants. The Conservatory of Music has four hundred pupils; twelve at the expense of government; it gives prizes, and through the year several concerts. There is a Gymnasium too, and a school of Equitation. Mercy! what a litter of schools.

The institutions also for encouragement and literary intercourse, are numerous in all the branches of learning. At the head of these is the "*Institut de France*." Of the others, the most distinguished are the "*Academie de Medicine*," and the Geographical, Historical, and Agricultural societies.

The Public Libraries are the "King's," containing four hundred and fifty thousand volumes, sixty thousand manuscripts, one hundred thousand medals, and more than a million of engravings; the Library of the Arsenal, one hundred and eighty thousand volumes; of the Pantheon, one hundred and fifty thousand, and thirty thousand manuscripts; the Mazarine, one hundred thousand; and the City Library forty-eight thousand; and others, as of the Institute and Sorbonne, to be consulted occasionally. There are near two hundred Reading-Rooms, also Cir-

culating Libraries in all directions; and newspapers and reviews are a part of the furniture of every café, and other public house—without saying any thing of the Museums and Institutions of the Fine Arts.

In the Law School, a degree of Bachelor requires two years' attendance on lectures; a Licentiate three, and "Doctor of Laws," four. Pleading in court is preceded by a degree of Licentiate, three years' study, examination and thesis, and after oath of office a noviciate, or constant attendance on the courts, of three years. The Lawyers are *Avocats* and *Avoués*. The latter enjoins twenty-five years of age, certain years of study, a certificate of capacity from the Faculty of Law, and a Clerkship of five years in a *Cour Royal*. The duties of the *Avocat* are subordinate. This arrangement brings the inconvenience to the client of acting by two persons; the want of the best advice in the beginning, of unity of action and undivided responsibility. The advantage is that the *Avoué*, not being subjected to the details and humbler duties of a suit, takes a higher professional rank and character, and is less subject to undue influences, having no immediate relation with the parties. In admission to the bar, there is no

inquiry about moral character, and the judges are selected immediately from the schools. I will try to give you in two words the machinery of French justice. I go out of my course in reverence for your profession.

There is a "Minister of Justice." His office is to pursue and bring to punishment all wrongs done to the state. It is a bad relation, being that of vengeance and not mercy. Our principle is reversed, and the accused is considered guilty until proved innocent. For the whole kingdom there are 27 Royal Courts; and, corresponding with our Common Pleas, 365 courts, called "Tribunals of the First Instance." To each of the former is attached a "*Procureur General*," and under him a "*Procureur du Roi*," with a "*Judge d'Instruction*," and justices of the peace.—The plaintiff, or a police-officer, applies to a commissary, or mayor, or justice, or *Procureur du Roi*, and if a criminal action, the accused, who cannot be confined beyond twenty-four hours, is summoned before a "*Juge d'Instruction*," who questions, and releases, or commits him.

In the latter case he produces him, of course with all possible proofs of guilt (and to collect these proofs he may detain him, innocent or not,



nine months in prison)—before a Chamber of Council, having three judges, himself one, to examine whether there is cause of trial; and next before a Chamber of Accusation, which examines finally, and this concurring, he is tried at the Assizes. A jury of thirty (taxables to 200 francs) are chosen by ballot, of whom the accuser and accused strike off nine. The "*Procureur General*" then opens the trial, states the crime and names the witnesses; and the "*Avocat General*" appeals to the jury in behalf of the injured community, for justice.

The President questions first the prisoner, who if incautious or foolish, may be led, as is the intention, to convict himself, or if expert, as he has the right to question also, he may induce discussions not always to the credit of the magistrate or the majesty of justice. Secondly, he examines witnesses, the prisoner and counsel cross-examining, and the *Avocat General* then sums up the facts and evidence. Last of all the accused speaks, either by counsel or personally in defence; the court appointing counsel in case of his inability. The President then sums up, gives his opinions, the jury declares him guilty or not guilty, and the court determines the punishment. Small offences are

decided before a justice of the peace or a minor court, with liberty of appeal. Civil actions, below 1,000 francs, are tried before a justice of peace and decided finally by a *Juge d'Instruction*: above that sum there is an appeal to a Royal Court. In the "Court of Cassation" at Paris, the decision of any criminal or civil case may be re-examined, and if reversed it is referred to another tribunal. If the original decision is confirmed, it is reconsidered by this court, and if unanimous in the former opinion, it is submitted to a third tribunal, whose decision concurring with the first, is final. There are courts also expressly for the decision of commercial affairs. One at Paris with a president and two judges elected from the most respectable merchants. The number of judges of the kingdom is 4,000; of justices of the peace 3,000; the *Avoués* of Paris are above 200. The salary of a justice is 2,400 francs, of a Judge of Cassation 15,000; of a President judge 20,000; and a Premier President 40,000; and the entire expense of justice is above three millions and a half.

The judges are habited in black robes of silk, with a crimson sash about the neck and across the breast, with golden tassels. The lawyers

wear a black gown, and a "*toque*" or cap. They usually hire this costume for the occasion from a stall within the "*Palais de Justice*." This cap supplies the place of the old wig; it does more, for the pleader occasionally takes it off and shakes it at the judge, or throws it upon the table in the fury of debate, and then puts it on again. It is certain that gesture was designed by nature to make up the deficiencies of language. It is often the more expressive of the two, and whoever omits it or misuses it, must leave imperfect his meanings or the passions he attempts to represent. Cicero even sets down mimicry amongst the accomplishments of an orator. Whoever converses in English and French will feel, for some reason, a disposition to much action in the one, and less in the other, in expressing the same feelings, which gives rise to a diversity of taste.

But in all such matters there are standard rules in truth and nature which cannot without bad effect be violated. In gesture the English sin by neglect or awkwardness; the French chiefly by extravagance. Rapidity and frequency impair dignity, and even gracefulness is acquired somewhat at the expense of strength. A French orator will tear his ruffles when the

occasion does not warrant it; reserving nothing for a fiercer passion. To tell you he has seen a ghost, and not heard of it, he will apply a forefinger to the under lids of his two eyes; and to tell you emphatically that he came on horseback, he will set two fingers to ride upon a third. While the Englishman "on high and noble deeds intent," puts his right hand in his bosom and his left in his breeches pocket. Propriety lies somewhere between these two extremes. There are two choice lawyers at the French bar, at present, Berryer and Charles Dupin; both eminent models of chaste and graceful oratory. This is enough of the limping old Lady Justice.

A degree of Doctor of Medicine must be preceded by a degree of Bachelor of Letters and Science, and four courses of lectures, a thesis sustained in public, and five public examinations. A vacancy in a professorship is supplied by a "*concour*," that is, the several candidates appear before the Faculty, a subject is given, they retire, and in the prescribed time return with their thesis, which they read and sustain in public, and the choice is settled by a majority of the judges. The diligence of a French doctor should take him to heaven. He rises in the

night, and, long before other men have left their pillows, has done a good day's work. He has visited from four to five hundred sick in the hospitals, prescribed for each, made his autopses and other operations, and explained the cases separately and conjointly to his pupils. He has then consultations till ten, breakfasts, and is in his Professor's chair at the hour, visiting his patients and giving audience in the intervals of these duties—and has the rest of the day to himself.

In his professorial capacity he wears a cap, a gown and crimson sash. He has given up the wig and gold-headed cane to Molière. Medicine here is divided into strict specialities. One man feels your pulse, and another gives you physic. This exclusive attention to one object, at the same time it impairs the general excellence of the profession, has made the French the most expert operators in the world. Civiale in his *Lithotritie* has no equal amongst living men; Laënnec does wonders in Auscultation with his Stethoscope, and Larrey, who has cut off the legs of half Europe, and was knighted by Bonaparte for such merits, has been far obscured by the fame of Dupuytren.

It is said here commonly by foreigners that

in the French practice there is a reckless sacrifice of life and disregard of humanity, by adventurous and needless experiments; having, at least, no other object than surgical instruction, and that, from neglect or ignorance of treatment after operations, the loss of patients is greater than in any other country. I should suppose, from what I have myself seen, that a millstone, compared to a French surgeon's heart, would be good pap to feed one's children upon. I may remark, also, that the science of medicine seems to me less indebted for its improvement to the good feelings, than to the pride, jealousy and avarice, and other bad passions of its practitioners. They have, to be sure, the courtesies they cannot well avoid for each other in social intercourse, but their private and professional purpose appears to be to starve each other, to persecute each other to the grave, and dissect each other after death. Broussais whips all the world, and all the world Broussais. A lecture of Lisfranc is a flourish of bludgeons and daggers; he lashes Velpeau and Roux, even stabs Dupuytren in his winding-sheet, and has as many lashes in return. It is surprising that the professors of humanity should be precisely those who have the least of that commodity on

hand. The great disputes, just now, amongst the choice professors, are whether one ought to bleed or not bleed in acute fevers;—this in the nineteenth century! and whether one should administer purgatives in typhus and typhoid affections.

M. Boulaud and Chaumel, and somebody else, are gaining famous reputations for this “new practice,” which gained and lost reputations in America forty-six years ago. However, from the facility of dissections, the number of sick in the hospitals, as well as from the eminence of the teachers, and cheapness of education, the School of Medicine of Paris is called very generally the best school of the world. It has at present twenty-three professors, besides honorary professors and assistants, and the number of students is about four thousand five hundred.

I have already said a great deal about these French schools, but I have added another sheet and may as well go on to the end of it. From a bare enumeration, you see that education is here thrown in every one’s face as a thing without price. If books and instruction constitute learning, the most literary people of this earth are assuredly the Parisians. But there is scarce

any error to which short-sighted mortals are more subject than referring effects to wrong causes ; and I believe a very common application of it is, to attribute a vast number of virtues to our learned institutions which they are not entitled to. I believe we over-rate generally the advantages to be derived from abroad to the prejudice of personal exertions ; a source to which, after all, we must resort for at least three-fourths of our acquirements.

Corporations of learning are altogether modern devices, and many nations were eminent in learning before their invention. At the end of the fifteenth century, all science was thought to be shut up in their halls. Only think of ten thousand students in the University of Bologna at once !—and it was not until Lord Bacon and some others had dissipated a little of this error, and taught men to look into nature and experience, and not into the cloisters of the monks, for mental improvement, that any one sought it elsewhere.

But many persons are still wedded to the system, and still think that all that is wanting to the discipline of the mind, is the munificence of government in founding Universities ; so some think that building churches is all that is



wanting to take one to heaven. There has never been a law-school in Great Britain, and in no country of Europe has there been an equal number of eminent lawyers, and teachers of the law. It is since the Revolution that a law-school exists with any credit in France, and her Hôpitals and d'Aguesseaus, and other distinguished lawyers, are anterior to that date. And what did the old French Academy for learning, which the members would not have done, and done better, in their individual capacities? The unaided works of individuals of the same period are as superior to her united labours, as the poetry of Racine or Boileau to her prize poems, or Johnson's Dictionary to the Dictionary of the Academy.

When men have been used to see a certain assemblage of objects in connection with learning, to imagine it attainable by any other process is more difficult perhaps than you imagine. When Doctor Bell attempted to introduce writing upon sand into his school at Calcutta, it was opposed by the patrons of the school as a ridiculous innovation, and not one of the regular instructors could be found, who would even aid in making the experiment; all stuck out for the dignity of pot-hooks and goose-

quills, and this doctor was forced to train a few of his own pupils to these new functions ; which gave him the first idea of his monitorial system of teaching. We perceive daily the inefficiency of our present systems and practices, but we have been set a-going in a certain direction, and we will not depart from it.

It is known that the Athenians were the people of the world, who set the highest value upon learning, and that they had no Universities or Colleges ; and that they obtained a literary eminence, which modern nations do not pretend to have equalled, without the instrumentality of such institutions. The profession of teaching amongst them was left open to the competition of professional ability, and the teacher received no salary from government or any corporation ; except that the academy was assigned to Plato, as the Lyceum to Aristotle, and the Portico to Zeno, in reward of extraordinary services. But the teachers of that country were such men as Aristotle, Plato, Isocrates, Lysias, Longinus, and Plutarch, who, be it said with much respect for the Cousins and the Villemains, have had no superiors since their times ; and the Lyceum, Academy, and Portico, though private schools, and sustained

only by the teachers' merits, and the public patronage, were the noblest institutions of any age or country, not excepting the Sorbonne, and the College de France.

The good which these corporate institutions do, seems to me doubtful ; the evil which they do is manifest. I will notice one or two instances ; and first, the injury they inflict upon the common or private schools, which covering a greater surface of instruction and communicating the knowledge most useful to mankind, should not hold a second place in the public concern. It is a rule of all countries not to supply the professorships of colleges from the inferior orders of the profession. In other pursuits, promotion is the reward of actual services ; from lawyers are judges, from sailors admirals, and from cardinals popes ; but in teaching, the very fact of being a teacher acts as a disqualification for any higher distinction.

But otherwise, the evil is still flagrant ; for academical honours lie in so narrow a circle, that a small number only can have a hope of reward ; and with the most impartial choice equal merit at least must be unjustly rejected. Such honours are taken from a general stock. It is fencing in part of a common ; employing

the manure upon one spot, which should fertilise the whole field ; or it is worse ; for, in the exact proportion that the professor rises into distinction, the common teacher is degraded. The one advances, while the other is made to retrograde by the same impetus. Thus in all modern nations the least important individual of a community is the schoolmaster.

Either his talents are not called out by any high motives to exertion ; or if his ambition should attempt a rivalry with the institution, having its diplomas, titular distinctions, public honours and endowments, and so many things independent of professional ability to sustain it, what chance has he of success ?—That only of the individual who trades against a chartered company : he must expect to be driven from the market. On the other hand the college professor, being without a rival, becomes lazy and inert. Voltaire says, that not one of the French professors, except Rollin, had ever written any thing worthy of remembrance, whilst in Greece, by far the greatest of their distinguished writers had been either public or private instructors.

Another signal mischief of these schools is, the multiplying professional aspirants beyond the necessities of the state, and filling the pro-

fessions with persons not competent by nature for such pursuits. The ascent to literary and professional honours is exceedingly rugged in all countries, and always crowded to excess with adventurers. The brilliant honours which have attended the fortunes of a few persons here, continually lure others from their useful employments, to try their luck in the great lottery. All are tempted, by a single success, to expect the prize; and the blanks pass for nothing. As soon as any trader or mechanic has grown comfortable by his industry, instead of raising his sons to his own useful employment, he resolves that one, at least, shall be a gentleman, and therefore sends, generally, the most lazy and stupid to college.

The common event is, that the young gentleman having acquired, from his college associations, ambitious desires, and habits altogether adverse to ordinary industry, and finding the avenues to success shut against his little diligence or abilities, is driven to dishonourable expedients for a living; he turns gambler or drunkard: or, at least, if he does not make gunpowder to kill the "King of the French,"\* he

\* A nest of students has lately been detected in this employment.

resorts to law, or gospel, or medicine, and gleans the stubble for a miserable subsistence during a long life, (for poor devils won't die,) or he turns common hack upon the high way of letters, and peddles and hucksters all day, for his meagre provender at night. If you think this a caricature, come and live in the "Latin Quarter," and you will find it is a handsome enough likeness.

However, I do not mean by all this reasoning, that you are to burn the University of Pennsylvania; but, that a system which cannot be changed, may be improved. I should like to see it confined to the highest possible range of studies, so that a smaller number of persons may be seduced from the laborious pursuits, and those common things, the schoolmasters, may have a wider field of duties, and, consequently, a larger share of the public consideration, and the dignity of human nature. It is silly to talk of the prosperity, especially of a literary employment, where honour and profit are not given to those who administer its duties.

I know two or three members of the Institute, who will be angry if I should tell you not a word of that "*bel etablissement*." I have read somewhere, that Fulton having sued the protection of this Institute in vain, for a whole year,

was afterwards enabled, by an individual, called William Pitt, to bring his valuable invention into the service of mankind; which seems to import, that "forty men" may not have always "*de l'esprit comme quatre.*" Such institutions, when established, like the geographical and other societies, for literary intercourse and correspondence, are of manifest utility; but when they assume judicial powers, and accord the world

"just as much wit,

As Johnson, Fleetwood, Cibber shall think fit;"

standing between the author and the public; or when they become a privileged class, invested with honours, which cannot be attained by others of equal merit, I am a hardened heretic in all my opinions respecting them. I know, moreover, no scheme of patronage that secures such academical honours to the most worthy.

We used to see rejected in the old Academy, such names as Helvetius, Molière, Arnault and Pascal, and the two Rousseaus; and such as Sismondi and Beranger, in the present. Beranger, the poet, the most original and philosophical, one of the most richly endowed with poetic genius of the present age, "who, under the modest title of 'Songs,' makes odes worthy the

lyre of Pindar, and the lute of Anacreon," was refused the vacant place of this year, in the *Académie des Belles Lettres*, and it was given to Mr. Somebody, who writes vaudevilles. Broussais, who has left an impress upon his age, by his genius, was rejected in the "*Académie des Sciences*" for a Monsieur Double—and who knows M. Double? And Lisfranc, to whom surgery owes more than to any living Frenchman, was excluded for a Monsieur Breschet—and who is M. Breschet? I might as well ask, who, in the "*Académie de Médecine*," are Messrs. Bouriât, Chardel, Chereau, Clarion and Cornac.\*

The students pass their nine years here upon Latin, as in America, and by nearly the same processes; that is, the children are drilled as with us upon the studies of mature age, and improve their memories without much troubling the other faculties. A boy for instance, at ten and twelve years, is made to strain after the beauties of Cicero and Horace, which are conceivable

\* Racine told the Duc de Maine, who was anxious for a place at the old Academy, that there was no place vacant; but there was no member, he said, who would not be glad to die to accommodate him—"qui ne tint à grand honneur de mourir, pour lui en faire une"—and Racine said this seriously.



only by a well-cultivated manhood ; and in the elementary schools, babies are taught, exactly as in Philadelphia, all the incomprehensible nonsense of the grammars. Any child here can tell you why a verb is "active, passive, and neuter," and how the action must pass from the agent to the object, to make it "transitive;" and they study reading and punctuation on the "Beauties of the Classics," as we do:—"vital spark," (a comma,) "*Heavenly flame*," (a semicolon;)—and the little things are taught to "Hic and Hac," at a public examination to please Mrs. Quickly just as with us. Paris is, also, full of instructors, calling themselves Professors, who have introduced all the different ways of turning dunces into wits, in six lessons, which are practised so successfully in Philadelphia ; and they have tapestried every street with their "new systems," under the very nose of the Minister of Public Instruction. In the chamber adjoining mine is a young Englishman, just arrived, without a knowledge of French, to a course of medical study ; he has taken a master, a venerable and noisy old man, who humbly conceives that the whole English nation is stupid, because this youth cannot pronounce *vertu*. He made, this morning, fifty persevering efforts, each

louder than the last, and still it was *verthu*. The old gentleman sat afterwards in my room awhile, quite meditative, and at length said, in a very feeling manner:—"I believe the English nation is fool!"—I know another teacher, an Englishman, who retaliates upon the French the violence done his countrymen. He begins by dislocating a Frenchman's jaws. His "system" is to commence with the difficulties, and all the rest, he says, is "down hill." So he has a little book of phrases, "made hard for beginners," as follows:—"I snuff Scotch snuff, my wife snuffs Scotch snuff."—*A lump of red leather, and a red leather lump,*" &c. The scholar, having overcome these preparatory difficulties, takes up Sterne's sentimental journey. It is, he says, as one who learns to run, having put on leaden shoes; when relieved from the weight he can almost fly.—I verily believe that the greatest fools, all over the world, are those who communicate knowledge; as the greatest knaves are usually those who teach men to be honest.—*Je ne sais si je m'explique.*

In the Parisian schools there is at present no corporal punishment. The student used to be flogged in these same Halls till there were no more birches.—Solomon may say what he

pleases, I will not have my children whipped. The only natural authority for whipping, is in the parent, and it cannot be safely delegated to another. The discipline here is every where good.

The professors of Paris are men of the world, and mix in its pleasures. They have nothing in their air of awkward timidity, or haughty arrogance, or ridiculous pedantry—the faults often of those who live apart from fashionable society. They are as well bred as if there were no scholars at all. And they do not set them up here as examples to other men, or make them die, as with us, martyrs to virtue, at the rate of five hundred dollars a-year, and find themselves.—I know several of these professors, and one intimately; he attends to both the moral and intellectual improvement of his pupils, and is most assiduous in his duties. Moreover, he has three rooms in different parts of this “Latin Quarter,” in one of which he has a very pretty little mistress, highly cultivated in music and letters; in another he resides with his books, and has frequent conversations with venerable men about the best systems of education; the third he keeps for occasional adventures. He is much esteemed, and would not be less were I to publish his name.

My opinion is, that America has little to learn from Europe on the subject of schools ; she wants but a wise and diligent application of the knowledge she already possesses, and which future experience may suggest ; she runs at least as much risk of being led astray by European errors, as enlightened by European wisdom. The better scholarship of Europe, is not attributable to the better organisation of her schools.

I am aware there are opinions and doctrines in this letter which are not orthodox, but you did not ask me to write after other men's opinions, but my own. On education the sentiments of men are yet unfortunately unsettled, and the field is open for speculation. With great respect, I remain your very humble servant.

## LETTER XVI.

Ladies' Boarding Schools.—Names of Professors in the Prospectus.—System of Education.—American Schools.—Preference for Science.—High Intellectual Acquirements not approved.—Learned Women.—American Girls.—Comparison of French and American Society.—The care to preserve Female Beauty.—Expression of the Mouth.—Dress of American Women.—Notions of the Maternal Character.—Studies in Ladies' Schools.—Literary Associations.—Société Geographique.—French Lady Authors.—Living Writers.—Chateaubriand — Beranger — Lamartine — Victor Hugo — Casimir de la Vigne — Alfred de Vigny — Guizot — Thiers — Thierry Ségur — Lacretelle — Sismondi.

Paris, December 25th, 1835.

I AM going in my usual way to write you what has most engaged my attention during the last week. I have been breaking into ladies' boarding schools, and turning and twisting about the school-mistresses, and making them explain their plans of education ; which they have done

very obligingly, leading me through their dormitories, refectories, and school-rooms. The French women are so kind in showing you any thing. In the street, I often chose to lose myself a mile or two rather than impose upon their good nature. The organization of their schools has nothing different from the French boarding schools of Philadelphia. Their elementary branches are the same. Their foreign languages are German, English, and Italian; and these, with drawing, dancing, and needlework, make up the programme of studies. Most of the schools are in airy situations, with large gardens, having baths, and gymnastic exercises attached. Rewards and punishments are as usual; bulletins of conduct are sent to the parents, and public examinations are made to astonish the grandmothers and bring the schools into notoriety.

All the professors are printed up ostentatiously in the prospectus. One is "*Danseur de l'Académie Royal de l'Opera;*" another is "*Professeur du chant au Conservatoire;*" a "*Chevalier de la legion d'honneur*" teaches you your "pot-hooks;" and an "*Instituteur du duc de Bordeaux,*"—" *de la Reine de Portugal,*" &c. your parts of speech. In the best schools the

annual charge for boarding and education, including the foreign languages, is about two hundred dollars. Dancing and drawing are each three, and the piano six dollars per month.

A French woman is emphatically a social being, and prepares herself for this destination. A philosophical apparatus is no part of the furniture of her school-room; nor does she rashly study Latin, nor any of the "inflammatory branches." But she makes herself well acquainted with all that is of daily use; her geography, history of France, mythology and the fashionable literature, and tries to be very expert in the "use and administration" of this learning; she talks of books and their authors, especially the drama, of the fine arts, of social etiquette, of dress and fashions, and all such common topics, better than other women. She studies the graces of language, and all the rhetoric of society, as an orator, that of public life. She learns to speak, not with the tongue only, but with the action, gesture, voice, and expression, which may give life and magic to her conversation.

You will hear her talk of the "*jeu du visage*," and she thinks a woman, who has no variety of

face, had better have no face at all. I take the liberty of thinking so too; extending only the rule to the whole woman, body and soul. What is she, after all, without variety? any thing is better; a fish without seasoning is better. I had almost said that a woman much oftener palls the appetite of her husband by uniform goodness, than by her caprices and levities. I have found it pleasant, after having a chill, even to have a fever by way of variety. And why should not the eloquence of common life be quite as important as that of the bar, or senate, or pulpit? since it is of daily use, and the other only occasional, and since much more important interests are affected by it.

A French woman does not limit her views of education to her maiden years, nor to her domestic and nursery duties, not being destined to be imprisoned by her husband, or devoured by her own children; nor to her marriage settlement; for this is the business of her mother; her aim is to prepare the qualifications of womanhood; and her ambition is not to win the unbearded admiration of boys, for her intercourse is to be with men, competent, from taste and understanding to judge of her acquirements, as well as to add something to the polish



of her mind, by their manners and conversation. But the taste of gentlemen here, even of the learned, seeks not so much science in a lady as a certain knack in conversation, which may give a good grace to all that she says.

In our American schools science has taken precedence every where of letters; it has not only the principal seats at the universities, but in our best female academies is thought to be the most exalted and necessary kind of knowledge. It is so interesting to see a young miss expert at her sines and tangents; and presiding over a cabinet of minerals.

Why, a New England lady analyzes the atmosphere and gossips hydraulics at her tea-table. I have been puzzled there upon theories of geology, or meteorology, at a wedding. "Sir, this is a trap formation,—the angle seventeen minutes and three seconds."—I do not mean to depreciate this kind of learning, but I would not make it the principal object of a gentleman's, much less, a lady's education. Calculations of science have little to do with the affections; they exercise only the mechanism of the understanding; and leave the imaginative power—the power which adorns and illustrates by images—unemployed; and the mind, under a

mathematical training, becomes too systematic for the irregularity of human affairs.

The partiality for science prevails in gentlemen's education, also in Europe. The chief professorships of the colleges are scientific, and in the Institute, the Academy of Sciences, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up all the rest. But in the female schools such inquiries are postponed, at least, to the ornamental and agreeable. A French lady is of the romantic school, and thinks the classic too severe for feminine charms. Therefore, all studies which do not supply the materials of daily conversation, and have no immediate connection with some purpose of her social existence are rejected from the general plan of female instruction.

Acquirements highly intellectual in a lady, are not much approved by the French tutors and others with whom I have conversed. They think them dangerous to her domestic qualities. A Parisian lady living continually in society, having such accomplishments, would become too much the property of the other sex. Besides, such an education, they say, made Madame de Stael a libertine, Madame Centlivre, and two or three more, licentious, and Madame Montague a sloven and something else, and so they

run on. One might ask them in return what it made of Mesdames Barbault, Hamilton, Porter, Edgeworth, Hemans, and that good old blue-stockings saint, Hannah More. It is true that learning is more attractive, and will always be more courted and flattered than even beauty; and in this sense it is dangerous. The Greeks gave Minerva a shield, and turned Venus loose without one; it was apparently for this reason. Learning in France always studies books and the world together; the "Blue Stocking" is not known here, nor is there any equivalent term in the language. The "*Precieuses Ridicules*" is of a different character. So at least the learned woman has not to dread this opprobrious designation, which so terrifies ladies in some other countries. I know one, not of the Tuileries, but the Collieries, who, under the awful apprehension of Blue Stockingism, almost repents of her learning; hides her Virgil, and disowns her Horace altogether. There are places where ladies think proper to apologise for their virtues, and ask pardon for being in the right.

A French lady is not afraid to show her possessions. She shows her learning, and knows how to show it without affectation. She displays it

as she does her pretty foot and ankle ; she does not pull up her clothes expressly for the purpose. As for me, I love a learned woman, even in her blue stockings ; and without them I love her to idolatry ;—I mean a reasonable idolatry, which leads to a higher reverence for the Creator from an admiration of his best works. One of the grand purposes of a Frenchwoman, is to seem natural ; and, indeed, if a lady is natural, even her singularities add to her perfections, whilst affectation makes even her sense and beauty insipid and ridiculous.

I talked with one of these mistresses about you American girls. She says you come too soon into the world, and take too many liberties when in it. This, she thinks, interferes with education, and awakens inclinations and passions which had better sleep until the girls have grown up. She says that tender plants should be kept a long while in the nursery ; that to play well in the concert, one must play well at home, and that the whole of youth is even too little for acquirement. “These young ladies, you see, are not unhappy from the restraints they undergo ; and they are not less accomplished I assure you. By coming sooner into society, they would acquire a bad tone, a bad

manner, a bad air, which a mature age and judgment might be unable to correct. In a word, sir, a young lady below eighteen sees enough of the world over her mother's shoulders." So talked this impertinent little woman.

A Frenchwoman has no attentions from society while a girl, and consequently, no wit till she is married; exactly the period at which American ladies generally lose theirs. A smile and a few timid glances under the wing of her beautiful mamma, is all the little thing dares venture. But the American girl has the reins of her conduct a good deal in her own hands, and therefore grows prudent; she has her reason and judgment sooner developed. She has all the serpentine wisdom and columbine innocence so recommended in the Scriptures in her looks and actions. I feel, my dear sisters, all the admiration and respect which is due to you, but with my utmost efforts I cannot help falling a little in love with this innocent indiscretion of the French.

It would have puzzled the evil spirit more to tempt Eve after the fall than before it; yet I like her in the first state better. Their not coming into the world before the full time, I like also

well enough. My tastes are not girlish. The eye indeed reposes with delight upon the green corn, but the ripened ear is better. I know, indeed, all the sweetness which a fine day pours out upon Chesnut-street ; but —— I like better your mothers. They who give tone to society should have maturity of mind ; they should have refinement of taste, which is a quality of experience and age. As long as college beaux and boarding school misses take the lead, it must be an insipid society in whatever community it may exist.

Middle age in this country never loses its sovereignty, nor does old age lose its respect ; and this respect, with the enjoyments which accompany it, keeps the world young. It turns the clouds into drapery, and gilds them with its sunshine ; which presents as fine a prospect as the clear and starry heavens. Even time seems to fall in with the general observance. I know French women who retain to forty-five and often beyond that age the most agreeable attractions of their sex.—Is it not villanous in your Quakerships of Philadelphia to lay us, before we have lived half our time out, upon the shelf ? Some of our native tribes, more merciful, eat the old folks out of the way.—Don't be

mad ; you will one day be as old as your mothers.

An important item here in a lady's studies (and it should be a leading branch of education every where) is her beauty. Sentiment and health being the two chief ingredients and efficient causes of this quality, have each its proper degree of cultivation. Every body knows that the expression of the eye, the voice, and the whole physiognomy, is modified by the thoughts or passions habitually entertained in the mind. Every one sees their effects upon the face of the philosopher and the idiot ; upon that of the generous man and the niggard ; but how few have considered that not only is this outward and visible expression nothing but the reflection of the mind ; but that the very features are in a material degree modelled by its sensations.

Give, for example, any woman a habit of self-complacency, and she will have a little pursed up mouth ; or give her a prying and busy disposition, and you will give her a straight onward nose. What gives the miser a mouth mean and contracted, or the open-hearted man his large mouth, but the habitual series of thoughts with which we are conver-

sant? Determination stiffens the upper lip, and this is the lip of a resolute man. Peevish women and churls have thin lips; and good humour, or a generous feeling, or a habit of persuasion, rounds them into beauty. I have read that it was common amongst the rakes about Charles the Second to have "sleepy, half-shut, sly and meretricious eyes," and that this kind of eye became fashionable at court. So every feature has its class of sensations by which it is modified; and this is not forgotten in the education of the Parisian young ladies. They take care that, while young and tender, they may cherish honest and amiable feelings, if for no other reason than that they may have an amiable expression of countenance—that they may have Greek noses, pouting lips, and the other constituents of beauty.

Our climate is noted for three eminent qualities, extreme heat and cold, and extreme suddenness of change. If a lady has bad teeth, or a bad complexion, she blames it conveniently upon the climate; if her beauty, like a tender flower, fades before noon, it is the climate; if she has a bad temper or even a snub nose, still it is the climate. But our climate is active and intellectual, especially in winter, and in all sea-



sons more pure and transparent than these inky skies of Europe. It sustains the infancy of beauty, and why not its maturity? it spares the bud, and why not the opened blossom or the ripened fruit? Our negroes are perfect in teeth, and why not the whites?—The chief preservative of beauty in any country is health, and there is no place in which this great interest is so little attended to as in America.

To be sensible of this, you must visit Europe. You must see the deep-bosomed maids of England upon the *Place Vendôme*, and the *Rue Castiglione*. There you will see no pinched and mean-looking shoulders overlooking the plumpness and round sufficiency of a luxuriant tournure. As for the French women, a constant attention to the quantity and quality of their food is an article of their faith; and bathing and exercise are as regular as their meals. When children, they play abroad in their gardens; they have their gymnastic exercises in their schools, and their dancing and other social amusements keep up a healthful temperament throughout life. Besides, a young lady here does not put her waist in the inquisition. Fashion, usually insane, and an enemy to health, has grown sensible in this; she re-

gards a very small waist as a defect, and points to the *Venus de Medicis*, who stands out boldly in the Tuileries, in vindication and testimony of the human shapes ; and now among ladies of good breeding a waist which cannot dispense with tight lacing is thought not worth the mantua-maker's bill—not worth the squeezing.

When I left America, the more a woman looked like an hour-glass, like two funnels or two extinguishers converging, the more pretty she was considered ; and the waist in esteem by the cockney curiosity of the town, was one you would pinch between thumb and finger ; giving her a withered complexion, bloated legs, consumptive lungs and ricketty children.—If this is not reformed, alas the republic !—A Frenchwoman's beauty, such as it is, lasts her her lifetime, by the care she takes of it. Her limbs are vigorous, her bosom well developed, her colour healthy, and she has a greater moral courage, and is a hundred times better fitted to dashing enterprises, than the women of our cities.

The motherly virtues of our women, so eulogised by foreigners, are not entitled to unqualified praise. There is indeed no country in which maternal care is so assiduous ; but also there is none in which examples of injudicious tender-

ness are so frequent. If a mother has eight or nine children (the American number) and wears out her life with the cares of nursing them, dies, and leaves them to a step-mother, she is not entitled to any praise but at the expense of her judgment and common sense; and this is one of our daily occurrences in America.—If a mother should squander away upon the infancy of her child, all that health and care which are so necessary to its youth and adolescence, or if by anticipating its wants she destroys its sense of gratitude, and her own authority, and impairs its constitution and temper by indiscreet indulgences—instead of being the most tender, she is the most cruel of all mothers—this happens commonly in all countries, and in none so much as in America.—If a mother should toil thirty years, and kill herself with cares, to procure for her son the glorious privilege of doing nothing, perhaps the means of being a rake and prodigal; she is a stupid mother, and such mothers——

But —— I forget I have a reputation all the way from Mohontongo-street to Adam-street, and I must take care how I lose it. Do you be a good little mother, and economise your health and good looks; and remember that a

little judicious hard fare and exposure will not injure your children's happiness, and that not the quantity, so much as the quality of your maternal cares is useful and commendable. I do not preach rebellion, but if I were any body's wife, and he should insist on killing me off for the benefit of his children, or to get a new wife—I should insist particularly on not being killed.

The system of ladies' schools here, is more reasonable than that of their worse halves. There is a better adaptation of studies to the capacity and future destination of the scholars, and to the uses of society; and being open to a fair competition, and to public patronage only, there is a better management of the details.

The gentlemen's colleges engross all the higher branches, and give them a specific direction, embracing only three or four of the employments of society, and these are, consequently, so overstocked, as to make success in them no better than a lottery. The community is, therefore, filled with a multitude of idlers, who falling often into desperate circumstances, either plot some treason against the state, or prowl, for a thievish subsistence about the gambling

houses.—His Most Christian Majesty must have as many lives as a cat to escape them.

There are also in Paris, a great many literary associations, to which ladies have access; and this gives the opportunity of a decorous intercourse of the sexes, which serves to elevate both in the eyes of each other. Woman, associated with man in his intellectual, as in his domestic pursuits, assumes the station, which, by nature, as by the rules of every polished and literary society, she is entitled to. These societies furnish agreeable entertainments for Sundays, or holidays; and they have the good effect of introducing the Muses, naturally awkward, into company, and making them acquainted a little with the Graces.

I attended, a Sunday ago, a meeting of one of these, the—“*Société Polytechnique*,” in the great saloon of the *Hôtel de Ville*. At the one end was an elevated platform, and mounted upon it a President and the usual apparatus of a meeting. Along each side were arranged the readers and orators, and distinguished guests. After a “*Rapport*,” read by the secretary, of the doings of the society, the speakers recited pieces of their own composition—some in rhyme, and many without rhyme or

reason. Some were designed to make us laugh, and others to cry, and we did both with great acclamation.—Music closed the scene; a duo by “Italian Artists,” and some one screamed a song on the piano. It is one of the advantages of a large city, that its meetings never want the dignity of a crowd, whatever be the occasion.—The bishop has his at Notre Dame, and punch his at the Champs Elysées.

I have been, also, to the “*Société Géographique*.” There were Captain Ross, from the North Pole, and—what remains of him from American bugs and mosquitoes—Captain Hall, and Baron Humboldt, and other Barons. An honorary badge of the society was presented to Captain Ross, with warm acclamation. I waited to the very end, for a lecture announced in the bill about—what do you think?—the “*Beaux Arts en Amérique*.”—But it was all about negroes and squaws, and such “copper fronts as Pocahontas.” It gave a history, circumstantially, of a great crusade of catguts, got up in Paris, a dozen of years ago, for Brazil, which scraped an acquaintance with Don Pedro, and spread the gamut all over Patagonia. Polyphemus threw away his pipe, and sang nothing but, “*Tanti Palpiti*” to his sheep, and the

sheep bleated nothing but *mamma mia*, in reply. —“ *Ainsi, Messieurs*, (this is the ending,) *cet immense progrès est dû à la Grande Nation, dont nous nous honorons d'être une humble partie.*” From the “*rapport*” of this “*société*,” it seems to be a most valuable institution. The topics are various and useful, and its researches are carried by correspondence into every corner of the earth.

I must say a word of a school I visited this morning called the “*Ecole Orthopedique*,” to correct physical deformities, and slovenly habits. Here all that is gross in human nature is refined, all that is crooked reformed. There are as many branches as at the university. One professor ties strings a foot long about your ankles, to prevent too much stride, and another “straightens legs for both sexes.” Angular knees, and stoop shoulders, and such little freaks, are affairs of a fortnight. I have seen, with my own eyes, a girl whose face, they say, was running one way and her feet the other; people walking after her were continually treading on her toes, and in less than six months she has been turned round. The highest chair in this school is for teaching “sitting”—it is occupied by the President. There is also a chair for “walking,”

and one for "standing still." In some countries these are thought mere simple operations to be performed by any one who has wherewith to stand or sit upon.

Let me now introduce you to the French Lady Authors. The family is so small I shall happily have room for them on the rest of this page. The Dowager on the list is the *Duchesse d'Abrantes*, with her Memoirs; and next her the *Princesse de Salm*, who wrote an "Opera of Sappho" and "Poetical Epistles," very good for a Princess; also a work called *Vingt-quatre heures d'une femme sensible*, in which there is a display of rich and brilliant fancy. I never read it.

*Madame Tastu* wrote a volume of little poetry very much loved for its tenderness, and *Made-moiselle Delphine Gay* (now Madame Girardin) also a volume of miscellaneous poetry, very pretty and delicate, and she is almost a Corinne for extemporising; last of all, the exquisite Baroness *Du Devant* (George Sand;) the gayest little woman in all Paris, who has written novels full of genius, and fit almost to stand along side of Aphra Behn's and Lady Mary Montague's verses. When they publish an edition, with little stars \* \* *in usum Delphini*, I will send



you a copy.—I shall perhaps have room also for the gentlemen.

The patriarch is *Chateaubriand*. It is idle to talk about him. He sold the copyright of his works for twenty years only at five hundred and fifty thousand francs. Who has not read his *Génie du Christianisme*, *Martyrs*, *Journey to Jerusalem*, *Amerique Sauvage*, *Atala*, &c. He has written also “*Memoirs of his own Times*,” not to be published till his death. Every one is anxious to read them. The oldest of the poets is *Beranger*. His songs are worthy of Pindar in boldness and sublimity, and not unworthy of Anacreon in liveliness and grace. I have only room for four lines:—Napoleon in his glory.

—— dans sa fortune altière,  
Se fit un jeu des sceptres, et des lois ;  
Et de ses pieds on peut voir la poussière,  
Empreinte encore sur le bandeau des rois.

At his death ;

Il dort enfin, ce boulet invincible  
Qui fracassa vingt trones à la fois !

Another special favourite, the poet of romance and melancholy, is *Lamartine*. He has written “*Meditations* ;” also *La Mort de Socrate*, and

the last canto of "Childe Harold." Here are eight of his lines.—The "Golfe de Baia."

O, de la Liberté vieille et sainte patrie !  
Terre autrefois féconde en sublime vertu !  
Sous d'indignes Césars, maintenant asservie,  
Ton empire est tombé ! tes heroes ne sont plus !  
Mais dans ton sein l'ame aggrandie,  
Croit sur leurs monumens respirer leur génie,  
Comme on respire, encore dans un temple aboli,  
La majesté du Dieu dont il etait rempli.

He now makes eloquent speeches in the Chamber of Deputies.—Politics run away with all the genius, and rob even the schools of their professors. Only think of such a man as Arago prating radicalism in the Chamber of Deputies. The Muses weep over his and Lamartine's infidelity.

I have read *Victor Hugo* lately, and love him and hate him. Like our mocking-bird, he mingles the notes of the nightingale with the cacklings of the hen. But I must not abuse him, the ladies all love him so. Only think of "*Bug Jargal*," the "*Dernier jour d'un Condamné*;" and above all, "*Notre Dame de Paris*;" and think only of poor little Esmeralda, put so tragically to death on the Place de Grève in spite of her little goat Djali, and her little shoe.

—I have read his tragedies, *Hernan*, *Le Roi s'amuse*, and *Marie Tudor*; passbleu! and "*Lucrece Borgia*." His poetic works are *Les Orientales*; a collection of odes; *Les Feuilles d'Automne*, &c.

Victor Hugo is yet in the full tide of youth, and so is *Casimir de la Vigne*. The latter represents to-night, at the Theatre Français, his *Don Carlos*; he has already reaped much glory from his *Vêpres Siciliennes*, *Paria*, *Comedienne*, and *Ecole des Vieillards*, and still greater from his Poetic Lamentations, the *Messeniennes*, which are full of patriotic sentiment, expressed in the richest graces of poetry.

*Alfred de Vigny* has written a pretty poem, the *Frégate*, and two biblical pieces, *Moïse*, and the *Femme Adultère*; but his great praise is *Cinq Mars*, one of the best compositions of the French historical romance.—Scribe, Picard, and Duval have written so many vaudevilles, that one has a surfeit of their names. *Dumas* is a dramatic writer of first-rate merit for these days. His *Antony*, *Thérèse*, *Henry V.*, and *Catharine Howard*, are all played with success. *Jules Janin* has a great fund of wit; his *Ane Mort*, *Femme Guillotinée*, *Chemin de Travers*, you can read with the certainty of being pleased.

I have said nothing of Leclercq, Langon, Balsac, Meremy, and Lacroix, who have all their share of admiration, especially from the fair sex.

When the vapours have smothered the sun, and when it rains, as it does always, instead of inhaling charcoal, or leaping from the Pont Neuf, I go into a "cabinet de lecture," and read *Paul de Kock*. No author living can carry one so laughingly through a wet day. If you are fond of the genuine wit of low life, neither Fielding, nor Smollett, nor Pigault Lebrun, will disgust you with Paul de Kock. But here comes the end of my paper, what shall I do with the rest? I will just string them together by the gills.—Give Guizot credit for a *History de la Civilisation*, a translation of Gibbon, and a score or two of volumes on the English Revolution; *Mignet* and *Thiers* for a History of the French Revolution, and *Barante* for his Dukes of Burgundy; *Sismondi* for a History of the Italian Republics, of The French, and the Literature of the South; and *Daru*, of Venice; *Thierry*, of the Conquest of England; *Capefigue*, the Reform; *Lacretelle*, The 18th Century; *Ségur*, a Universal History; *Michaud*, of the Crusades; *Delaure*, of Paris;

*Michelet*, of Rome; and *Précis de l'Histoire de France*. *Cousin* has written the "Philosophy of History;" *Keratry*, Metaphysics, and Novels; and *Villemain*, *Melanges de Litterature*, and *M. de la Mennais* is praised for his "Indifference in matters of Religion."—The French were strangely deficient in history before the present century, not even having furnished a good history of their own country; they have now supplied their deficiency in this department of letters.—Now with all due respect, and a full sense of the distinction, I place myself at the bottom of this illustrious group. Your obedient, humble servant.

## LETTER XVII.

The Theatres.—Mademoiselle Mars.—Théâtre Royal.—Italien.—Grisi.—Académie Royal de Musique.—Taglioni.—Miss Fanny Elsler.—The Variétés.—The Odéon.—Mademoiselle George.—Hamlet.—Republican Spirit of the Age.—Character of the French Stage.—Machinery of the Drama.—The Claqueurs.—Supply of New Pieces.—The Vaudevillists.—M. Scribe.—The Diorama.—Concerts.—Music.

Paris, December, 1835.

I WILL treat you this evening to the play. The bill of fare is the *Théâtre Français*, *Opera Français*, *Italien*, *Opera Comique*, *Gymnase*, *Vaudeville*, *Variétés*, *Gaité*, *Ambigu* and *Palais Royal*, with twice as many more which we will reserve for the side dishes and the dessert.

The Post has brought me a letter from your mother, of November, which I have just read,

and could not help laughing at the vanity of her fears. My morals indeed ! fortified as they are by the good breeding I had from my Scotch grandmother and Presbyterian catechism.—I went last night to the play, and saw there a great many Sins, which came in their usual shape of pretty women to tempt Saint Anthony. They danced about him, and enticed him with voluptuous smiles and looks, and even set themselves at last to turn somersets to overcome his virtue, but he stuck fast to the faith.

So do I.—I should like to see all the pretty women of Paris come to tempt me. If it had not been for your mother's letter and St. Anthony, I should not have thought of the theatre this evening.

What say you to the " Français " and Mademoiselle Mars ? — Mademoiselle Mars ! why she was an old thing twenty years ago ; and acts yet all the charms and graces of the most amiable youth. Time flutters by and scarce breathes upon her with his wings ; he is loth to set his mark upon a face which every one loves so. Why, what is younger than her voice ? It is clear as the whistlings of the nightingale, or it is soft and mellow as the

notes of the wood thrush ; or if she pleases, it is wild as the song of the whip-poor-will, and savage as the scream of the bald-eagle.

In gesture and the dramatic graces she is no longer subject to rules, but, like Homer, gives rules to all others of her art. When you have looked upon her divine countenance, so expressive of the seriousness of age, or the vivacity of youth ; when you have listened to her sweet and honied sentences, you will say, what praise can be exaggerated of such an actress ? Molière could not have had a proper conception of his own genius, not having seen Mademoiselle Mars. What a crowding and squeezing we shall have for a place ! I have bought this privilege often by more than two hours attendance. Lady Mars is more chary of her favours now than in her greenest age. Like the old Sibyl, she sets a higher value upon her remnants than upon the whole piece.

This theatre, with its three tiers of boxes and two of galleries, contains 1,500 persons. It is called the "*Theatre Royal*," and is very disposed to exercise its royalty despotically. It forbids the representation of tragedy at the other theatres, and has a claim upon every élève of the Conservatory ; which claim it does not



fail to assert as often as any one is likely to attain celebrity elsewhere; and its old actors having a monopoly of the choice parts, it prevents easily the advancement of the new aspirants, and weakens the rivalry of the other houses. Its distinguished actors, besides Mars, are Plessy, Chambaud, Dupont and Madame Volnys; its favourite writers Delavigne and Hugo.—Scribe too being now a member of the Institute and assuming a spirit equal to his new dignity, has abjured the ignoble vaudeville, and writes only five acts. In the vestibule you will see an admirable statue of Voltaire with the “sneering devil” in its marble features.

You must go two evenings of the week to the “Italien; it commences in October. In October, Paris is repeopled with its fashionables, and the weeping country is forsaken. This Opera is crowded for the season with the choicest of Parisian beauty, with all the upper sort of folks, as high as the two Miss Princesses and their mamma the queen. A few evenings ago I saw an English woman here, prettier than them all; she, who with so much genius writes tales for the *New Monthly*, and poetry for the *annuals*—Mrs. Norton. I analysed her elegant features from the pit, and

wondered how so pretty a woman could write verses. Of all the gratifications of Paris this theatre is surely the most delectable.

I went, on her first night, to see Signora Grisi, and since this first night, she is Grisi to me. Her melting voice and love-making features live in the memory always. Whilst she sings, one is all ear, all sense, and intellect is hushed; never did the quiet midnight listen to its nightingale so attentively; and as the last note expires, *brava! brava!* exclaims the incontinent Frenchman, and a thousand *bravas* and *bravissimas* are repeated through the house; *O beneditto!* just breathes the Italian expiring; *che gusto! piacer de morire!* and the unbreathing German goes silently home and lives upon her for a week.

At the close of the last song, and as the curtain threatens to descend, the acclamation bursts into its loudest explosion, and seems for a while inextinguishable; now every one who has a white handkerchief waves it, and every one who can buy a wreath or a bouquet strews it upon the stage. On Saturdays I steal into the third tier towards heaven, and there drink the divine harmony, as one thirsty drinks the healthful stream; or sit under a shower of bright eyes in

the pit. The present Italian company forms a union of talent (so say the best critics of the world) such as the world has never seen excelled. Lablache explodes as the thunder, when it mutters along the flinty ribs of the Tuscarora; Rubini out-sings the spheres, so almost Tamburini, and almost Ivanoff. But to thee, black-eyed and languishing Grisi—what are they to thee!

“Ye common people of the skies,  
What are ye when the sun doth rise?”

At the risk of surfeiting you with sweetmeats, I will take you next to the grand opera—the *Académie Royale de Musique*, where the best music is Taglioni. If you have read in your Virgil of that namesake of yours, who made no impression on the dust, nor bent the light corn or blade of grass as she walked upon it; if you have seen a ghost curtseying along the flank of the Sharp Mountain, and leaving no trace of its airy feet upon the winnowed snows, then you can imagine Taglioni upon the scene of the grand opera, as she flits along the boards, with just gravitation enough to detain her upon the earth. But why absent in the very season of her triumphs?—You must content yourself with her nearest representative, Miss Fanny Elsler—

second only in grace, but second to none in any thing else.

I will describe you her performance. She will curtsy to her middle, and then rise in a *pirouette* two yards high. This is her preliminary step. She will then set off, and skip over the whole area of the stage, lighting on it only occasionally, trying her limbs, and, as it were, provoking the dance from afar, and will present herself to the spectators in all the variety of human shapes and appearances. One while you will see her, "many twinkling feet" suspended in the air, then twirling herself around till her face and hips will seem on the same side of her: at last, (and this is the epic strain of the performance, and, therefore, the last), she will poise herself upon the extremity of the left toe, and bring the right gradually up to the level of the eye (the house will hold its breath!) and then she will give herself a rotary movement, continuing it *in crescendo* till she becomes invisible. You can no more count her legs, than the spokes of a rail waggon carrying the President's Message.—This is Fanny Elsler. The description will seem bombast only to those who have not seen her, and to those who have, it will seem tame and inadequate. This letter has a great

struggle between prose and poetry; it is like one who is set upon a gallop against his will, gets out of breath, and comes panting in at the end of the course. I should have kept Mars, Grisi, and Taglioni to make an impression in the end—but you can begin with the last page, as girls do the new novel. I was last week induced by an acquaintance to go to the Variétés. It is a merry theatre, said he—“*il provoque le rire.*” This is a kind of provocation I have had frequent need of since I came to Paris. If you think there is no place for melancholy amongst these unsighing French people, you are mistaken. I have sat in this Bastille of a hotel, grave as a bust of Seneca, for a whole week, till all the Paris blue devils ——— and so I went to the Variétés, and saw *Frederic Lemaitre* in his own “Robert Macaire,” and, above all, the delightful *Jenny Vertprès*, and was not disappointed.

The French have a quick and lively observation, and can dress up a simple anecdote, or vaudeville, or a fancy-shop at the Palais Royal, with a prettiness no other nation need attempt to rival. There is a general good humour, too, about a French audience, which exhibits as much as the play.—There were several notable scenes in some of the pieces, which would be

worth telling you, if I had time. If you are not frightened at little licenses, this is a delightful theatre. You will see here *Achard*, who both sings and acts true comedy; and *Tansez*, who "looks broad nonsense with a stare." Brutus would have liked to have such a face when he played the fool at Rome; and, above all, you will see that exquisite rogue, *Madame Dejaret*.

I went to my next neighbour, the *Odéon*, not long ago, where I saw *Néron, l'Empereur, et Madame sa mère*, and Monsieur Britannicus. Mademoiselle George, once the delight of the capital and its emperor, is yet a well-timbered and hale old woman. She has, in her favour, the dignity of fat, and looks devil enough for Agrippina.—But the French wear the sock more gracefully than the buskin. Their tragic Muse is sublime always, and therefore always ridiculous. She puts on a *qu'il mourut* kind of face, and carries it about through the whole five acts. She calls the dogs always with the same voice, as when she sees the game. But tragedy, it seems, is in her decrepitude all over the world; the sublime is worn out of our nature; all we can do, now-a-days, is to be beautiful. Miss George, with a little help from *Anais* and *Dorval*, has been lugging the

old cripple about Paris, for several years, on her own back. Decent comedy has nearly the same service, but with more vigour, from Mademoiselle Mars. I have got over just in time to see the fag end of the two Goddesses.

The sterling old plays of Corneille and Crebillon, which recommended dignity and energy of character, are played no more—even upon their native scene, the Théâtre Français. It is not even *bon ton* to speak much of them, it is provincial and almost vulgar; if played at all, it is only to revive, a little, the dying embers of Miss George.—I have seen played other tragedies, and one notably called “Hamlet.” I was lured by the name. It is so pleasant to meet an old friend in a foreign country! But, alas! it was not “Hamlet the Dane,” but Monsieur Hamlet, of the Théâtre Français—When the French get hold of a foreign author, as Shakspeare or Göethe, they civilise him a little—frenchify him. It is not to be expected that he should have all the polish and all the graces, as if he was brought up in Paris. They chasten the music, too, in the same manner; and M. Hertz, Musard, and Co. spend whole lives in adapting (as they call it) Rossini, Mozart, and other foreigners, to French ears.

But in these light productions, the vaudevilles which are played at the "Gaieté" and "Variétés," and such theatres, and which are the fashion of the day, the acting and composition are both perfect. Ligier, Bouffé, Armand, and Pontier, and the ladies Anais, Vertprès, and Fay, are no common-rate mimics. And there are many others of nearly the same merit, seemingly all made expressly for their several parts, in this great farce of human littleness. Who was that new comer (a Yankee) who said, "They wanted to make me believe the actors on the stage were living people, but I wasn't such a novice as they took me for?" It has not been a Parisian theatre that this incredulous man visited.

I ought to conduct you, but have not time, to some of the other theatres—to the Porte St. Martin, where Mademoiselle George looks "*Lucrece Borgia*;" to the "Gymnase," which smells of the counting-house, and Scribe's plays, and where Bouffé plays, as no one else can play, his "*Gamin de Paris*;" and especially to the "Vaudeville," to see the elegant *Brohan*, the lovely *Targueil*, the sprightly *Mayer*, and tender *Thenard*, the scape-grace *Madame Taigny*, and the inimitable old woman *Guille-*



*min*, and *Lafont* and *Arnal*—or to the “Opera Comique,” where you would hear those two mocking-birds *Mesdame Damoreau* and *Lavasseur*; and finally to *Franconi’s*, where you would see *Madame* Something else, on her head on horseback, and *Auriol* on his slack rope—the rest is stupid. I have seen them all; even the *Funambules* and the *Marionettes*; I have seen *Madame Saqui’s* little show, for six pence; and I have cried over a melo-drama, at the “*Petit Lazari*,” for four sous.

If one comes to Paris, one ought to see Paris. This you cannot do in the domestic circle—the stranger is not admitted there. And certainly not in public places, for the world no more goes thither, in its natural expression and opinions, than the fashionable lady in her natural shapes. You must look at it in its looking glass. A stage, patronised by twenty-five thousand spectators, every night, cannot be a very unfaithful representation.

The dignity of human greatness; the high-born, hereditary authority, and lowly reverence, which produced strong contrasts of passion with refined and elegant manners, have withered away under the Republican spirit of the age. Kings and lords, and heroes are no more

held in veneration than Pagan Gods; not so much; for these at least are poetical. And from our universal reading and the easy intercourse which follows, a great man can scarce be got up any more in the world; we are all as intimate, with the imperfections of a hero as his valet de chambre. And the mock majesty of the stage has lost its respect at the same time. *Dufresne* used to say, "Sirrah, the hour"—to his hair dresser; who replied, "My lord, I know not." Mademoiselle Clairon kept her train, and equipage, and her *femme de chambre* addressed her as a queen. The patronage of a splendid court then excited a spirit of emulation among the actors, and gave them a sense of their dignity, which was sustained by the public feeling.

To-day the tragic hero lives with the common herd undistinguished; he is not even refused Christian burial when he dies. The world has been used, too, these fifty years to gross sensuality and crime beyond the example of all former times, and human sympathy has been staled by custom; matrimonial jealousy, which held the wolf's bane and dagger, is now either comic or insipid; a Phædra excites no disgust, an Œdipus inspires no horror. The passions,

which sustained the deep tragic interest, are quenched ; or they have become prurient and emasculate, and require to be tickled by a vaudeville. Farce has usurped the stage, and the dwarfish imp limps, where tragedy dragged her flowing robes upon the scene.

The French, who, before their Revolution, declaimed against the murders of the English drama, now out-kill all ages and countries. Rapes and massacres have been the staple of their lower plays for many years, and are not uncommon in the best. This taste is on the decline.—The intrigues and amours of young girls in Parisian society—are almost impossible. Danaë was not so guarded in her tower, as the unwedded females in Paris. The loves of married women are therefore the common plots of the French plays, as well as of French novels, and they are publicly applauded, as in the ordinary and natural course of society.—In our cities, the stage, ill attended, and not sustained by original compositions, must be a faithless mirror ; but I have no doubt that in Paris it represents the general features correctly.

Each of the French theatres has its range of pieces assigned, and cannot compete with, or injure another. Four of the principal ones, the

Italian and French Opera, Théâtre Français, and Opera Comique, pay neither rent nor license, but have two hundred and sixty thousand dollars annually from government. This sum is contributed from the five and a half millions derived from the gambling houses.

They make the devil pay his own debts. The Opera alone has two hundred thousand francs. And we expect in America to support two or three, and bring all our performers and fiddlers from Europe, on the taste of the community! A single singer may make her fortune in our cities, but a company must perish. The annual receipts from all the Parisian Theatres are about one and a half million of dollars. The author retains the control of his pieces, and receives from the theatres of the capital and provinces, a share of every night's performance during life, with a *post obit* of ten years. Scribe's revenue from this source is above twenty-five thousand dollars. A five-act piece pays the author at the "Théâtre Français" one twelfth.

There is a great deal of machinery about the French drama, which is but little known in countries less advanced in the art. For example, each theatre has attached to it a regular *troupe*

of applauders. These were originally got up for occasions, but in course of time they have become as an integral part of the corps dramatique;—they are called *Clacqueurs*, (Anglice *Clappers*.) Their art requires a regular apprenticeship, as the other branches of a histrionic education, though not a branch at the “Repertoire.” A person of good capacity may make himself master of it in two or three months.

They who have taken lessons in *Clacking* under the professors, can clap louder than ordinary people, and they know where to clap, which is something. They can shew also a great deal more enthusiasm than if they were really delighted;—as they who cry at funerals can cry better than persons who are really grieved. On my first visits here, I could not help remarking how much more feeling was a French than an American audience. The Théâtre Français went off in a crash every now and then, which one could hear to the Boulevards; and I could see no great reason for the explosion. On nights of deep tragedy they bring out also the female *Clacqueurs*. These are taught, one to sob, another to feign to wipe away a tear, and another to scream when a pistol goes off, and they are

distributed in different parts of the house. If you see any lady fainting on these occasions, don't pick her up, she is getting her living by it.

No piece succeeds, or actor either, unless these salaried critics are employed. If neglected, they turn out among the hisses. Even Talma had to pay to this High Chancery his regular tribute. In some of the houses there are two rival companies, and the player is obliged to bribe both, or the rival pack will rise up and bark against him. The actor has his regular interviews with the chief officer, and they agree beforehand upon what parts are to be applauded, with the quality and quantity of the applause. "At this passage," says Mars, "you must applaud gently, at this a little louder, and at this moderately"—*Cependant Madame*, a *beau sentiment* like this ——— "Quoi ! *Cependant Monsieur*.—It is forty years, sir, since I have been playing in this house, and no one has dared to say to me, '*Cependant !*' I tell you, you are to keep your ardour to the end of the scene. I have no notion of being blown up to heaven in the middle of a passion, and left dangling two feet in the air at the end of it. Here is the place you are to applaud ; here you may give a

clap and a *brava*; and here, (mark well this point,) at this finale I must have the whole strength of your company."

"Give me your hand, M. Gigolard; here are fifty francs, and a little present for your wife. And, recollect, I must have this evening my *Grand Entrée*; I have been absent these three months, and my return requires that attention."

A *Grand Entrée* is where the actress has a burst of acclamation just at her entrance, which is kept up afterwards louder and louder; she bows, and they applaud, and there must be a great conflict between joy and gratitude until she has exhausted a clap worth about ten francs.—These *Clacqueurs* are, on all ordinary occasions, arbiters of the fate of a play or the actor; it is only at a new piece, and a very full house, that they are obliged to consult a little the impressions of the audience.

The Parisians require to be fed continually upon new pieces, and are seldom contented with less than three of an evening, as the epicure prefers several courses, and does not throw away a good appetite upon a single dish. This has given vogue to their short and piquante pieces, the vaudevilles, and produces them several hundred new ones each season, and the manu-

facture of these pieces has become a regular business on a large scale. A prime vaudevillist does not pretend to furnish his pieces single handed ; he has his partners, his clerks, and his understrappers.

These last are a kind of circumforaneous wits, who frequent public places, and run all over town in search of plots and ideas, or some domestic scandal of dramatic interest, and they have their regular cafés or places of rendezvous, where they work to each other's hands. If you have come just green from the country, and entering a café, see a number of grave and lean persons seated about at tables, seeming entire strangers to one another, and saying not a word about Louis Philipe, or the "Procès Monstre," this is a café of the vaudevillists. They hunt particularly after persons who arrive with some originality from the Provinces. In cities men are nearly all cast in the same mould ; mixing continually together, there is little departure from the fashionable opinions and expressions.— You will see each one with a newspaper, a pencil, and a bit of paper, reading and commenting.

You will see a smile sometimes crossing the serious features of the divine man, and now and then he will start—he has harpooned an idea.



Soon after you enter, one will make your acquaintance, especially if you have a comic face. He will treat you to rum and coffee, he will offer you the journal, point out to you the amusing subjects, and set you talking. And you will be delighted, and you will say, not without reason, the Parisians are called the politest people upon the earth. They will not let you go until they have sucked the last drop of your blood, noted down your clownish looks, and airs, copied your features, and robbed you of your very name. At last they will make you mad; for they must see you under the influence of different passions; and if you are impudent they will kick you out of doors.

When you are gone, they will very likely quarrel over your spoils—about the right of ownership; and when the dispute is compromised, the most needy will traffic you away for a consideration. One will sell one of your *bon mots* for a lemonade; and another one of your sheepish looks for a *riz-au-lait* or some more expensive dish according to its dramatic interest and novelty. Some of these men keep regular offices, and sell out plots and counter-plots and *bon-mots*, as brokers do mortgages and bills of exchange. Others bring their

rough materials to the great manufactory under which they are employed, and receive from Monsieur Scribe or some other master workman, their pay or an interest in the piece proportionate to the value of the contribution. I know of one who has been living upon the eighth of a vaudeville for several years; and another, who is getting along tolerably on a piece of a joke; being a partner with three or four others.

But you must not be running always to the theatre, there are other amusements which claim a share of your attention. At the *Tivoli* you will find concerts, balls, and fire-works; and you may take an airing every fine evening in a balloon. You have only to ride up to the *Barrière de Clichy*, or it will stop for you at your garret-window. Besides, you have to see the Panoramas, Cosmoramas, Neoramas, Georamas, and the Dioramas.

The Diorama is amongst the prettiest things in Paris. But how to describe it?—You find yourself seated in an immense church, into which you have passed through a dark entry; and whilst you are contemplating its august architecture, twilight comes on imperceptibly, and you see suddenly around you a full congre-

gation, seated, or standing and kneeling, and very intent on their prayers ; all which with a little brighter light were invisible. You are then regaled with solemn church music, and assist at the vespers. It is all enchantment. You forget it is day. The voices of men and virgins die away in the distant space, like the voices of unearthly beings. The light returns gradually, the worshippers fade away into air, and you are seated as at first in the silent and lonely cathedral.

You now enter another room, and a vast prospect of beautiful Swiss scenery is opened upon your view, bounded only by the horizon. Before you is a lake, and flocks and herds feeding, and all the glowing images of a country life. How still the atmosphere, and a little hazy and melancholy, as in our Indian summer; you can almost fancy the wood-pigeon's moan. In the mean time a storm is brewing beyond the distant mountains; you see the gleams of the lightning, and hear the muttering of the thunder. At length the storm gathers thick around you; the end of a mountain is detached from its base, and the avalanche covers the lake, the flocks, inhabitants, and huts, and you are seated amidst the desolation. You are not

conscious of the presence of any painting; all is nature and reality.

A few words of the musical entertainment will fill up the measure of this sinful letter. There is a rotunda in the Champs Elysées devoted to concerts every evening from six till nine, throughout the summer season. Here are played the fashionable airs and concertos, and all the chef—d'œuvres of Italian and German masters. The little quavers play sometimes softly among the leaves of the trees, and now and then pour down like a deluge crash upon your ears. There are sixty musicians; and for all this ravishment a gentleman pays twenty sous, and a lady half-price.

In the winter season the whole of this music and more takes refuge at Musard's, a central part of the city. Here is a large room fitted up brilliantly with lustres and mirrors, with a gallery over-head, and a room adjoining for refreshments. The orchestra is in the centre surrounded by seats for the audience. There are seats also around the extremities, and between is a wide promenade filled up every evening with visitors all the way from Peru and Pegu; and with any quantity of Parisian

fashionables, who come hither to squeeze and quizz one another, and see the music.

Only think of all this refreshment of the ears, and eyes, this gratification and improvement of the taste at twenty sous a night! There is a similar establishment in another section of the city; and these with the concerts of the Conservatory, private concerts, and operas, make up the musical entertainments of Paris.

The French are not, naturally, a very musical people. After all their fuss about a royal "*Académie de Musique*," and their twenty or thirty pupils at the expense of government, and sent for the improvement of their voices to Rome, they have produced little music. Their Boieldieu and Auber are the only composers who can take seats (and this at some distance) with the Rossinis, Mozarts, and Webers. Their great pianists, Hertz and Kalkbrenner, are Germans; Beriot, the greatest violin, is a Belgian; Lafont only is French. Their natural music, the Troubadour and the rest, has been so wailed in the nursery, and so screamed on the theatre, that the world is sick of it. A man advertised for a servant lately, who could not sing "*Robin du Bois*."

## LETTER XVIII.

Parisian habits.—The Chaussée d'Antin.—Season of Bonbons.—Jour de l'An.—Commencement of the Season.—The Carnival.—Reception at the Tuileries.—Lady Granville.—The Royal Family.—Court Ceremonies.—Ball at the Hotel de Ville.—French Beauty.—A Bal de Charité.—Lord Canterbury.—Bulwer.—Sir Sydney Smith.—The Court Balls.—Splendid Scene.—The Princess Amelia.—Comparison between Country and City Life.

PARIS, January 25th, 1836.

As your husband has gallantly allowed me the exclusive pleasure of writing to you this week, I am going to use the privilege in giving you his biography for the year 1836. For a wife to judge of her husband's conduct from her husband's letters, is absolute folly.—He rises at day-break, which occurs in this country, at this season, about nine; he makes his toilet

with Parisian nicety, breakfasts at eleven, and then attends his consultations, till three. After this hour he runs upon errands. Paris covers eight thousand five hundred square acres, and he has business at both ends of it; I have to run after him, just as a man's shadow would, if people in this country had shadows, a league to the east, and then a league to the west, only because he don't know a Frenchman calls his mother a *mare*, and a horse a *shovel*. As he and his partner do not comprehend each other, and he cannot communicate with the world out of doors, you may imagine I have got myself into a business.

And here are all nations of the earth to be interpreted, and all sexes; French, Spaniards, Italians, Poles, and modern Greeks. "God's life, my lords, I have had to rub up my Latin." One might as well have been interpreter at Babel. We dine at six, and have all the rest of the day to ourselves.—Then comes smoking of Turkish tobacco in a long pipe, then a cup of good coffee and the little glass of quirsh; and then conversations—conversations, not about burning Moscara, and the Bedouin brothers; or whether beet sugar should be taxed; but that which it imports more our happiness to know,

what vintage is the wine, and whether we are to pass the evening at the Italien, or Grand Opera. Our host, who is a French gentleman, a man of the world, and refined in learning, adds the perfume of his wit to the little minutes as they go fluttering by.

*A propos* of good coffee, I will tell you how to make it. Make it very strong, and then pour out with your right hand half a cup, and with your left the milk, foaming and smoking like Vesuvius upon it; it is reduced thus to a proper consistency and complexion, retaining its heat. Strange! that so simple a process should not have superseded the premeditated dishwater of our American cities. This is the *café au lait* of the breakfast; the coffee of the dinner is without milk.

At length conversation flags, and we sit each in a "*Fauteuil*," recumbent, and looking silently upon the Turkish vapour as it ascends to the upper region of the room, till it has obscured the atmosphere in clouds as dark as science metaphysic; and then we sweeten ourselves with open air and evening recreations—

"Vive Henri Quatre! vive ce roi vaillant!"

And so we stroll, arm in arm, through the Boulevards to the "Rue Favart," and there



drink down Grisi until the unwelcome midnight sends us to our pillows. This repairs us from the cares of the day, and raises us up fresh and vegetated to the duties of tomorrow. I must not forget to tell you, we live now in the *Rue Neuve des Maturins*, a little east of the Boulevards. I was quite disdainful of this unclassic ground after so long an abode among the Muses; but this street is more than classic, it runs right-angled into the aristocratic *Ghaussée d'Antin*; is full of honour and high fare, and ennobled by some of the best Parisian blood.

Your husband—I suppose by living here, has got into the *bel air* of the French. (I forgot to put a *dash* under his name.) He has his share of Favoris, and mustachios, and a coat from Barde's that would win the ear of a countess. Barde makes coats for "crowned heads," and takes measures at Moscow;—and he never ties his cravat—(I mean your husband)—just in front, but always a quarter of an inch or so to the left; nor sends a lady a red rose, when white roses are in the fashion; and though he speaks nothing yet of the French jargon, he makes Paris agreeable to every one. Folks, to be liked in this country, are obliged to be amiable—a

violent effort sometimes for me. In this respect we have an advantage at home, where poor people only are required to have wit, and twenty thousand a-year may be as big a fool as it pleases.

This is the season of *bon-bons*. I think I see you, and little Jack and Sall, parading your littleness upon the Boulevards—which I presume you will do this time next year. Here is the whole animal creation in paste, and all the fine arts in *sucre d'orge*. You can buy an epigram in dough, and a pun in soda-biscuit; a "Constitutional Charter" all in jumbles; and a "Revolution of July" just out of the frying-pan. Or, if you love American history, here is a United States' frigate, two inches long, and a belly-gut commodore bombarding Paris—(with "shin-plasters")—and the French women and children stretching out their little arms, three quarters of an inch long, towards heaven, and supplicating the mercy of the victors, in molasses candy.

You will see also a General Jackson, with the head of a hickory-nut, with a purse, I believe, of "carraway comfits," and in a great hurry pouring out the "twenty-five millions," a king, a queen, and a royal family, all of plaster of Paris. If you step into one of these stores you

will see a gentleman in mustachios, whom you will mistake for a nobleman, who will ask you "to give yourself the pain to sit down," and he will put you up a paper of *bon-bons*, and he will send it home for you, and he will accompany you to the door, and he will have "the honour to salute you"—all for four sous.—But I must get on with my biography.

We went, the first day of the year, to the Palace, and saw the king and the queen with our own eyes. I must tell you all about it. Paris usually comes to town three months before this. The gentry, and the woodcock, and all the Italian singers come in October, and every thing runs over with the reflux of the natives, and the influx of foreigners. Of the latter, the greater part are English, who, to escape the ignominy of staying in London at this season, or being uneasy on their seats, (I mean their country seats,) come hither to walk in the Rue de la Paix, and sleep in the Rue Castiglione. You will see now and then a knot of American girls, who sun themselves upon the Boulevards, or sit in the Tuileries to do mischief with their looks upon bearded Frenchmen.

But the gaities at this season only essay their little wings; they do not venture beyond the

opera and private parties, and a display of black eyes and fashionable equipages at the Bois de Boulogne, until the close of the year. Then all the sluices are set loose. Then magnificent beauty encircles the boxes at the opera, decked in all the gems which the "swart Indian culls from the green sea," and overlooks the gazing deluge of spectators from the pit, and the nut-brown maids of Italy and France wave around the ball-room in all the swimming voluptuousness of the waltz. Grisi warbles more divinely at the Italien, and, at the Grand Opera, more sweetly, Taglioni

"Twirls her light limbs, and bares her breasts of snow."

"Due pome acerbe, e pur d'ivorio fatte,  
Vengono e van, come onda al primo margo,  
Quando piacevole aura il mar combatte."

Harlequin now puts on his fustian mantle, and all Paris, her caps and bells, turning out upon the Boulevards, and men and women run wild through the streets. This is the Carnival, which will continue gathering force as it goes, till the end of February, as a snow-ball upon your Pine-Hill comes down an avalanche into the valley. On Shrove-Tuesday all will be still—operas, balls, concerts, fêtes, the racket of the fashionable soirée, and the orgies of the Carnival

will be hushed ; and then the quiet and social parties will employ the rest of the season.

My Lord Granville will be "at home" on Monday, and the Duchess de Broglie "at home" on Saturday ; in a word, every one that can afford it will be "at home" one evening in the week, receiving and entertaining with gaiety and simplicity his friends, until the dog-star shall send again the idle world to its shady retreats of Montmorency and St. Cloud. The first drawing-room or "reception" at court, on the New Year's night gives the watch-word, and announces that the season of mirth has begun. This is followed by the regular court-balls, and balls ministerial and diplomatic ; and the balls of the bankers and other opulent individuals bring up the rear.

We put ourselves in a black suit, in silk stockings and pumps, with a little, military tinsel, under the arm ; stepped into a *remise* (a *remise* is a public carriage disguised as a private one) and in a few minutes stood upon the broad steps of the Tuileries ; from which we were conducted up into the rooms, with no more ceremony than writing our names upon a registry in the hall.—The English and French books say that we Americans have a great

*penchant* for kings, and that we run after nobility and titles more than becomes republicans. Whether this be true or not, and whether it is really an inclination of human nature that, like other passions, will have its way, I do not stop to inquire; with me I declare it to be mere curiosity; I had the same when a mere child, for a puppet show, without wishing to be "Punch" or "Judy." But here I am moralising again when I should be telling you of the "Reception."

You must imagine a long suite of rooms, and the edges all round embroidered with ladies, strung together like pearls—ladies dressed in the excess of the toilet, and many hundred lustres pouring down a blaze of light upon their charms; and the interior of the rooms filled with gentlemen clad in various liveries, mostly military—in all you may reckon about four thousand, including Doctor C. and *me*. Here was my Lady Granville ambassadress and her Lord; I love a broad pair of shoulders on a woman—even a little too broad; and here was the fair Countess of Comar Plotocka. The richest mine that sleeps between your Broad and Sharp Mountains would not buy this lady's neck. I have heard it valued at three

millions. It would make a rail-road from here to Havre.

I have half-a-mind to put in here as a note, that we Americans in our citizen coats, and other republican simplicities, make no kind of figure at a court. When one contemplates brother Jonathan by the side of Prince Rousimouski, all gorgeous in the furs of the Neva—I can't find any other comparison than that character of arithmetic they call *zero*; for he seems of no other use than to give significance to some figure that is next to him. It is strange how much human dignity is improved by a fashionable wardrobe; I have seen a nobleman spoiled altogether by a few holes in his breeches.

The king, the queen, the princes and princesses entered about nine; they passed slowly round the rooms, saluting the ladies, saying a few words to each, with a gentle inclination of the head, and a proportionate jutting out at the head's antipodes:—the latter part of the compliment intended for us gentlemen. At the end of this fatiguing ceremony the royal family retired, bowing to us all in the lump.—I forgot to say, that being apart in a corner, as a modest maid who sits alone, the queen in passing

dropped me a curtsey for myself. When her Majesty bowed to the whole multitude the honour was wasted by diffusion. To have one all to one's self was very gratifying. They now posted themselves in a room at the south end of the company, accessible by two doors, through one of which gentlemen were admitted Indian file, and introduced personally to the king, the king standing on the right, the queen on the left of the room, and the little queens in the middle.

It was an imposing ceremony; and this was the manner of the introduction. For example, the Doctor, entering, gave his name and nation to the Aid-de-Camp, who pronounced it aloud; the king then *prit la parole, et un verre d'eau sucrée, de la manière suivante*: "You are from Philadelphia, I am glad to see you."—And then the Doctor, who had studied his speech in the ante-chamber, replied, "Yes."—After this he bowed a little to the queen, and walked out with an imperturbable gravity at the left door, as I had just done before him. We then went home, and told people we had spoken to the king.—This is a Reception at the Tuileries. To give you an account of the other charming fêtes we have seen this month, will require



another sheet.—The hour is late, I bid you good night.

January 26th.

The first fête of which we partook was a great ball given at the Hotel de Ville, to relieve the poor of the "Quartier St. Germain." Here, as every place else, where there is a chance of an innocent squeezing, there was a crowd. There were two thousand souls, all dancing in the same room; and the ladies, whom I include in the article of souls, were dressed *dans l'excès de la belle coiffure*. The Queen and Madame Adelaide, and other such like fine people, who were announced in the newspapers, hoaxed us by not coming. However, we danced all the poor out of the hospitals. We put on our rustling silks that the grisettes might get a blanket for their shivering babies, and our dear little prunellas, that they might have a pair of sabots, and a little bit of wool about their feet in the Faubourg St. Germain. Charity affects people in different ways. In Philadelphia it gives one a chill, or it sends one with a long face to pray at St. Stephens'; here, to "cut pigeon wing" at the Hotel de Ville. — The bill of fare was only ices, lemonades and eau sucrée — no liquors.

A Frenchman is always fuddled enough with his own animal spirits, and needs no rum. In all French parties in high life there is little ceremony about eating and drinking; it is economical to be well bred. Dancing is performed in the same monotonous dull way as in America. The "*pirouettes* and *entrechats*" are a monopoly of the Opera Français. English gravity was always afraid of being caught cutting a caper, and John Bull leads his lady through a dance as if conducting her to her pew. The fashion of now-a-days is any thing English, especially English whims and nonsense. "They are not dancing, but only walking in their sleep," is a *bon mot* of his Majesty, who is not much addicted to wit — better if he were; Fieschi would never have thought of killing him. But they are better walkers than we are. They are better dressed, too, though with less cost. In our country the same dress suits all ladies of the same size, being always made after the last doll that came over by the packet, only a little more fashionable. And so we are -

" Laced

From the full bosom to the slender waist,  
Fine by degrees and beautifully less."

And some of us

" Gaunt all at once and hideously little."

In Paris, a mantua-maker is a *bel esprit*, and does not follow rigidly but studies to soften a little the tyranny and caprices of fashion, and she knows the value of the natural appearances in the constitution of beauty. The fashions have, to be sure, their general feature, but the shades of differences are infinite. The woman and the frock, though not indissolubly united, seem made for each other. The French lead fashion; we follow it: their genius is brought out by invention; ours quenched by imitation. I looked on upon this ball with all the gaze of young astonishment. Staring is an expression of countenance you will never see among savages and well-bred people; I am somewhere between the two.

Your husband dived into the crowd, to try to discover some pearl of French beauty; ineffectually. One is at a loss, he says, for a temptation. He is so anatomical! he would like better Helen's skeleton than Helen herself. We don't see the same thing in a woman by a great deal—or in anything else. Travellers don't see the same things in Paris. Baron Rothschild and Sir Humphrey saw not the same thing in a guinea; and how many things did not Phidias see in his Venus, which neither you nor I will ever see in it.

The French women are nearer ugliness than beauty; but what women in the world can so dispense with beauty? Their cavaliers are handsomer, yet the exquisite creatures are loved just the same. I wonder if the peacock loves less his hen for the inferiority of her plumage, or she him the more for the elegance of his? The principal charm of a woman is not in the features; a lesson useful to be learnt. A turn-up nose once overturned the Harem, so says Marmontelle; Madame Cottin was an ugly thing, and yet killed two of her lovers; there are on record the examples of two women with only an eye each, who made the conquest of a king; La Vallière supplanted all her rivals, with a crooked foot. Ninon was not handsome, but who knows not the number of her victims? Self-flattery and the flatteries of admirers spoil pretty women, till at last, like sovereigns, they receive your homage as a tribute that is due, and enjoins no acknowledgment, and thereby they counteract the influence of their charms. —“But as I was saying—Pray, my dear, what was I saying?” — I will think of it to-morrow.

January 27th.

I cannot afford to give you all these sweet-

meats at a single meal; I must serve you up a small portion for the dessert of each day. Ball the second. This was one of the most splendid and fashionable of the season; also a *bal de charité* — given at the theatre Ventadour a few nights ago. A great number of Carlist nobles having lost their pensions and places, by the disaster of Charles X., have become poor, and this was to comfort them with a little cash. The parterre and stage formed an area for the dancing, and an array of mirrors at the furthest end doubled to the eye its dimensions, and the number of the dancers.

It was a vast surface waving like the sea gently troubled; and the boxes, filled with ladies, exhibited the usual display of snowy necks, and glittering ornaments overhead. The saloon and lobbies too, adorned with little groves of shrubbery, had their full share of the multitude. Here was the late Speaker of the Commons, Sutton, now better named for a ball-room, my Lord Canterbury, and my Lady Canterbury; and here was Bulwer, brother of Bulwer; and Sir Sydney Smith and other knights from afar; and all the *bel air* of the Paris fashionables; not the old swarm of St. Germain, the Condés and Turennes, the Rochefoucaulds, Montau-

siers, Beauvilliers and Montespan; but all that Paris has now the most elegant and aristocratic.

Here was Madame la Duchesse de Guiche, and who can be more beautiful? And the Duchesse de Plaisance, airy and light as Taglioni; and the prettiest of all Belgian ambassadors, Madame le Hon—*coiffé à ravir*. And the night went round in the dance, or in circulating through the room, or in sitting retired upon couches among the oranges and laurels, where sage philosophy looked on, and beauty bound the willing listeners in its spell. The music was loud and most exhilarating. In some parts of the house were all the comforts of elbowings, shufflings, crammings and squeezings, and on the outside all the racket that was possible of screaming women, and wrangling coachmen, from miles of carriages through every avenue. Some were arriving towards morning, and others have not arrived yet. This is the ball of the Ventadour.

We reached home just as Aurora was opening her curtains with her rosy fingers, and we crept into bed. The tickets were at twenty francs; ices, *eau d'orgéat*, and *eau sucrée*, were the amount of refreshments.

I have just room for a word of the Court Balls; and they are so much prettier than any thing else in the world, I am glad they come in last to your notice. They are held at the king's palace, the Tuileries; where a long suite of rooms are opened into one, and filled with a stream of light so thick and transparent, that the men and women seem to swim in it as fish in their liquid element. Between three and four thousand persons are exposed to a single coup-d'œil; the men gorgeously attired in their court-dresses; the women in all the sweetness of the toilet.

It is impossible to look in here without recognising at once the justice of Parisian claims upon the empire of fashion. Here is the throne and sceptre of the many-coloured goddess; and here from every corner of the earth her courtiers come to do her homage.

The king, on entering, repeats nearly the same ceremony as at his "Reception" of the new year; others of the royal family follow his example. A pair of cavaliers at length lead out the two princesses, and the ball begins through the whole area of the rooms.

To see so many persons, elegantly and richly attired at once entangled in the dance; crossing,

pursuing and overtaking each other ; now at rest, now in movement ; and seeming to have no other movement than that communicated by the music ; and to see a hundred couples whirling around in the waltz, with airy feet that seem scarce to kiss the slippery boards ; first flushed and palpitating ; then wearying by degrees and retiring, to the last pair, to the last one — and she the most healthful, graceful and beautiful of the choir, her partner's arm sustaining her taper waist, foot against foot, knee against knee, in simultaneous movement, turns and turns, till nature at length overcome, she languishes, she faints, she dies ! — A scene of such excitement and brilliancy, you will easily excuse my modesty for not attempting to describe.

As an episode to the dancing, there is a supper in the *Salle de Diane*, where you have a chance of seeing how royal people eat ; with a remote chance of eating something yourself. A thousand or more ladies sit down, and are served upon the precious metals, or more precious porcelain ; the king and princes standing at the place of honour, and a file of military-looking gentlemen dressed richly, along the flanks of the table. What a spectacle !



Ladies eating out of gold, and kings to wait upon them.

I sat opposite the royal ladies, and looked particularly at the little Princess Amelia, with her pouting lip "as if some bee had stung it lately." She just tasted a little of the roast beef, and the fish, and the capon, and other delicacies of the season; and then a bit of plum-pudding, and some grapes, and peaches, and apricots, and strawberries; and then she sipped a glass of port, and when her glass was out, my Lord Granville with great presence of mind filled her another; and then she finished off with a little burgundy, champagne, hermitage, Frontignac, bucella, and old hock—all which she drank with her own dear little lips.

These delicate creatures do almost every thing else by deputy, but eating and drinking. After the ladies, we gentlemen were admitted *en masse*, with not a little scrambling; which was the objectionable part of the *fête*. I was hungry enough to have sold my birthright, but did not taste of any thing; it required not only physical strength, but effrontery, and I have been labouring under the oppression of modesty all my life. Have you ever been to a dinner at the—"White House?" that's like

the finale of the king's supper in the *Salle de Diane*.

In my greener days, I saw the dance in my native Tuscarora, and went to see it twenty miles of a night upon a fleet horse, my partner behind, twining around my waist her "marriageable arms." I have now seen the balls of the French court, which are called the most splendid in the world. The difference of dress, of graces, and such particulars, how vastly in favour of the Tuileries!—but as far as I can recollect and judge from the outward signs, the enjoyment was as vastly on the side of the Tuscarora.—Beauty is of every clime, as of every condition. I have seen Alcina's foot upon the floors of the Ventadour, and upon a rock of the Juniatta, and all the varieties of human expression through all the ranges of human society. I have seen the humble violet upon the hill top, and the saucy lily in the valley. As for the pure and rapturous admiration of beauty and female accomplishment—alas, I fear it is not the growth of the libertine capital.—I am persuaded, that to have lived much in the country, conversant with natural objects, and subject to the privations of a country life, is essential to the perfection of

the human character, and of human enjoyments. In a city, the pursuits are frivolous; they narrow the mind, and are pernicious to its most delightful faculty—the imagination. The passions are developed there too early, and worn out by use.—The Tuileries, lighted with its tapers, and “glittering with the golden coats,” is beautiful; the ladies’ bright eyes, and the pure gems that sparkle upon their snowy necks too are beautiful. But I have been at Moon’s Drawing Room upon your “Two Hills,” and have gathered its pure light from your piny leaves; the stars and heavenly bodies looking on in their court dresses.

To walk in the Rue Rivoli as the sun descends towards the west is delightful, and in the Tuileries amidst its marble deities, or upon the broad eastern terrace, which overlooks its two rows of fashionable belles.—But I have walked in the lone valleys of the Shamoken, and have seen the Naiads plunge into their fountains; I have walked upon the Sharp Mountain top, exhilarated with its pure air and liberty, raised above the grovelling species, and held communion with the angels—this is more delightful still. Numa communed with his Egeria in the sacred grove; Minos with his

Nymph under the low-browed rock, and Moses retired to the mountain to converse with the Almighty. The pleasures of a city life stale upon the appetite by use; the delights of the country life "bring to their sweetness no satiety."

I had intended to put you up the whole of the Paris Balls in this letter, but the Masquerades remain for another occasion. My time has run out; the last grain of sand is in the dial. Good night.

## LETTER XIX.

Execution of Fieschi.—The French House of Commons.

—French Eloquence.—Thiers.—Guizot.—Berryer.

Abuse of America.—The Chamber of Peers.—Interior of Madelaine.—Bribery.—False Oaths.—The Middle

Classes.—America and England.—Opinions of America.—English Travellers in America.—Mrs. Trollope.

—Captain Basil Hall.—Miss Fanny Kemble.—Test of good breeding in America.—American feelings towards England.—Their mutual Interests.

Paris, February, 1836.

THE great state criminal Fieschi was executed yesterday morning on the *Place St. Jaques*, with his two accomplices, Maury and Pepin. He did not care a straw for mere dying, but he did not like the style of appearing barefooted before so large and respectable a company. He made a speech with as much dignity as could be expected, and quoted Cicero. This fellow has been for a while the hero of the age:

none of the French generals can bear a comparison with him ; and the dramatic interest given to his trial will no doubt produce a good crop of rivals. His behaviour was ostentatious, but intrepid to the last. He was none of your sneaking scoundrels, who are half honest through fear of the gallows. His mistress, Nina Lasave, is showing herself (what is of her, for she is less by an eye) upon the Place de la Bourse, and five thousand at a time are crowding to see her at twenty-five cents each. Signor Fieschi has not only acquired distinction for himself, but imparted a tincture of this quality to all that he has touched. Nina's fortune is made ; I wonder if this sympathy for the mistress of an atrocious murderer would be felt any where out of Paris ? I went to see her with the rest.

I was guilty (no easy matter in Paris), of an act of uncommon foolishness, in going to see this execution. The French way is so elegant and classic—it is none of your vulgar hangings on a gibbet, with a fellow creeping like a spider up the gallows, or the chopping off a head upon a block, as a butcher does a pig's. The guillotine is itself a piece of ingenious mechanism, and the executioner a gentleman ; he wears white gloves, and is called "Monsieur de Paris." So,

I went with other amateurs, and I have seen nothing but men without heads ever since.

For a change, I went this morning to the Chamber of Deputies. Don't you want to know something of this great council of the nation? I shall be glad if you do, for I have nothing else of sufficient dignity to come after this paragraph.

This is the French House of Commons. It has been in session these two months, and holds its meetings in one of the great architectural monuments of the capital, the Palais Bourbon. At its entrance, you will see four colossal statues upon curule seats, Sully, Colbert, Hopital and d'Aguesseau. The chamber is lighted from above, and is semi-circular, having at the centre a tribune just in front of the President's Chair, and over-head the reporters. The members are ranged according to their parties, on seats rising in amphitheatre. On the very left, or *extreme gauche*, are the Liberals; and on the right, or *extreme droit*, are the extreme Royalists; the hues of each party softening gradually, and blending as they recede from the extremes. On a gallery overhead are the spectators of both sexes.

The reading of speeches, which is common, and mounting the Tribune, even for a short

remark, are precautions taken against eloquence. I have heard that attempts are often made by several persons to speak at once, or to pre-occupy the tribune to the great disturbance of order. Persons are seen discoursing, generally with great animation, during the orator's speech. When there is a little too much noise the president taps with his paper-knife on the desk, and when a little more, he rings a bell; when this fails, he puts on his hat. The constant assent or dissent expressed at nearly every sentence, seems to me to touch upon the ridiculous—it drives all one's classic notions of a senate out of one's head. It is, perhaps, a necessary safeguard against being talked to death by some stupid and loquacious member, as happens occasionally in other countries.

The great man of the chamber is, at present, Thiers, Minister of the Interior. He is seldom at a loss for sense, and never for words; but neither his face nor his manner has any thing of eloquence. He is merely a facetious talker, and is nearly as expert at a *bon mot*, as the old Prince Talleyrand himself—a kind of merit that makes its fortune more readily at Paris than elsewhere. He is said also to emulate the great diplomatist in the flexibility of his politics;



having the same skill of being always of the strong party, without compromising his principles.

In society he is a good actor, and plays with grave diplomatists, or with little girls of fifteen, and pleases both. Not the least essential of his qualifications, is a revenue of two or three hundred thousand livres, which he has had the discretion to make, the gossiping world says, from his position of minister, by gambling in the stocks.

That censorial tribunal, which is called public opinion, and which forces a man in the United States sometimes to be honest against his will, is scarce known in this country. Indeed, I have not seen that any vice renders a man publicly infamous here, except it be giving bad dinners. On the other hand, they have one virtue, which I believe does not exist in the same degree amongst the statesmen of other countries—they are not so barefaced as to commend one another's honesty. Every body cries up parts, and poor honesty has not a rag to her back. Guizot, who is also minister of something, made a speech ethical and pedagogical, about education. He is the opposite of Thiers, of a stern and inflexible nature, and has an air of solemnity

in his face ; you would think he had just arrived from the Holy Land. He decomposes and analyses till he is blinded in the smoke of his own furnace. He is the great type of the "Doctrinaires." Though he does not throw his wisdom in every one's face, he has few equals in facility. After translating Gibbon, and writing several volumes on the English Revolution, he may well claim some praise for this quality. He has been for several years a leader ; but I have heard he is lately, for I know not which of his virtues, of less influence in the House. He and the Doctrinaires have the odium of the rigid censorships set up a few months since against the Press.

The other greatest men are De Broglie, Minister of Foreign Affairs ; Barrot, Mauguin, and Dupin the President. The last is ranked amongst the most eloquent of the French speakers. I have not heard him in any thing but the ringing of the bell. But the great ornament of French eloquence, at the bar, and in the tribune, is Berryer. He has an exceedingly happy physiognomy ; a broad and high brow, shaded with jet black hair ; a bland and persuasive expression of the mouth, and his voice is grave and impressive. The French generally impair the strength and dignity of

their oratory by too much action; Berryer in this is economical and prudent. Though leader *en chef* of the Legitimists, he defended strenuously Cambrón and Marshal Ney. He spoke also against the American Indemnity, and gave us very little reason to be satisfied with his eloquence.

I must tell you that the great staple of conversation here at present, is abuse of America, and that every thing looks warlike.—I heard a member of the Deputies say: “There are not ten men in the chamber who believe in the justice of your claims; we have been inveigled into the acknowledgment by our king, and bullied into it by your President.” If you know any nice computer of national honesty you had better get him to tell you the difference between the notorious rogue who robs his neighbours, and the four hundred and fifty-nine rogues who refuse to make restitution of the robbery.

This chamber is composed of men all above the middle age—none being eligible below thirty. They have a venerable and decent appearance, and for learning, I believe they do not suffer in comparison with any of the legislative assemblies of Europe. They are chosen from thirty

millions of people, by two hundred and fifty thousand electors, while the English House of Commons is selected by near a million of electors, from twenty-five millions. Their hours of sitting are from one to five o'clock. Spectators are admitted on the written order of a member.

We had a little spurt to-day upon rail-roads, and steam-boats; in which M. Thiers said there was in the United States a reckless disregard of human life; (*a prolonged sensation!*) and George Lafayette, his American partialities getting the better of his judgment, got up and defended our humanity. He gave himself as an example of the possibility of descending the Mississippi without being blown up—but nobody believed him; (*grand mouvement dissident!*)

Since on the subject of Chambers, why not pay a visit to the "Chamber of Peers." For this you must ascend the Seine to the Pont Neuf, and half a mile thence towards the south will bring you to the Palace of Luxembourg, the place of its sittings.

I wished a few days ago to see the interior of Madelaine, into which there is no admission; "not for the queen," said the door-keeper; but after a little fuss about honesty, and receiving

thirty sous, he permitted me to go in. In traversing the Luxembourg the same day, as I went whistling along, innocent of thought, I fell upon the ice against the statue of a goddess. In returning to my senses, I found a pair of fair arms about my neck ; it was not the Queen of Love, who had stepped from her pedestal, but a servant maid, who did me this service, she said, by order of her mistress ; and the incorruptible little wench refused, either for love or money, to tell me her mistress's name.

I attempted a few days after to enter the Chamber of Peers, and was refused by the door-keeper ; but, on placing in his hands a few francs, he furnished me the necessary passport. —What is the reason we find in no country the same fidelity from the public servants as from those in private life ?

This anecdote is to introduce you with proper ceremony to the Peers. The etiquette of great houses always requires the guests to be detained a reasonable time in the ante-chamber. But since I am on the subject of bribery and corruption—your agent here, Mr. R., told me in excuse for high commissions, he had to hire witnesses to prove the decease of heirs ; this he mentioned as a common business transaction.

—"And did you succeed?" "Oh, yes, we killed them all off," was his reply. I have seen also in Philadelphia an Irish labourer, taken at random from the street, who swore before a magistrate, a false oath, for a bribe of five dollars.

Now if this bribery is so easy in all the worlds, old and new, ask your husband, if you please, who makes laws, whether it ought not to suggest to the statesman, the impropriety of exacting oaths at all; which do not make the honest man more faithful, and certainly make the dishonest more corrupt.

The Peers have their chamber in the second story of this Palace. It is a semicircle on a diameter of eighty feet. A beautiful row of Corinthian pillars of veined stucco sustains the vault, upon which Le Sueur has painted the usual number of Virtues, civil and military; and between these pillars are statues of the most famous ancient orators and statesmen; Solon, Aristides, Scipio, Demosthenes, Cicero, Camillus, Cincinnatus, Cato of Utica, Phocion, and Leonidas. The disposition of the chairs and benches is the same as in the Chamber of Deputies. It is tapestried with blue velvet, wainscotted with looking-glasses, and a beauti-

ful lustre descending in the centre produces the light of five hundred tapers.

It is a rich and elegant chamber—a kind of boudoir of the French nobility. The staircase which leads to it is the most magnificent, they say, of all Europe.—The Peers are either dukes, marquises, counts, viscounts, or barons, and except the members of the royal family, and princes of the blood, are titled only for life. They sit at the same time as the Deputies, under the Presidency of the Chancellor of France. Their concurrence is necessary to all laws; and they try all cases of state crimes and high treasons. They have had a long time on hand Fieschi and the never ending “Procès Monstre.”

To set apart a few hundred individuals from the great herd, and give them the highest opportunities of improvement and polish, would furnish, one might suppose, at least a pretty ornament to a nation. However, it turns out that, in a high degree of fortune men do not submit to the labour necessary to intellectual improvement, and that they are exposed to more vicious temptations; that they have less dread of public opinion, and are spoilt in temper, by indulgences. In a word, we know

that human nature does not bear a very high degree of refinement.

As the taste may be rude and uncultivated, so it may be excessively delicate; and fastidiousness is almost as disagreeable as grossness. But inequalities are an ordinance of nature in society, as much as in the structure of the globe we inhabit; nor can we level the hills, or so raise the valleys that the hills will lose their eminence. The three great classes, besides the other reasons for their existence, may, for aught I know, be necessary to the improvement, and well-being of each other; the upper communicating emulation and refinement to that immediately below, and the lower furnishing nerve and industry to that immediately above.

“ Wholesome berries thrive and ripen best,  
Neighbour'd by fruits of baser quality.”

However this may be, it is certain that the middle class is the most sound and respectable of every community; and this is the class which is now ascendant in France. The Chamber of Peers is hardly noticed in the machinery of the government. This is partly owing to the democratic spirit transmitted from



the Revolution, but chiefly to the want of hereditary titles and estates. A lordship, without money, is a weight about the neck of its owner. Shabby peasants look well enough, but one has no patience with ordinary people of quality. Nobility holds the same relation to society, as poetry to prose; it does not suffer mediocrity. The too indiscriminate and common use of the French titles, has done much, also, to their discredit.

“ On ne porte plus qu' étoiles ;  
On les prodigue par boisseaux,  
Au pekins comme aux genereaux,  
Jusqu' aux marchands de toiles.”

M. Decaze made, during his ministry, as many as sixty nobles in a week. These gentlemen do not, themselves, seem to entertain a very high sense of their rank. I have heard of more than one hiding his decoration, to cheapen a piece of goods: as the Italian landlord, who passes himself for the waiter, to have the *quelque chose à boire*. I do not mean you to infer from this, that to be a nobleman it is necessary to be born so.

Nothing is so easy as to make any man think himself better than others; the facility

even increases in proportion as he is ignorant. The footman advances his pretensions with a simple change of his livery—by stepping only from an earl's coach to a duke's. A girl will change her opinions of herself, from neat's leather to prunella, and become prouder and nobler from cotton to silk stockings; but nothing can make any one noble who lacks the sense of superiority; in other words, who lacks money.

I must gossip a little to fill the rest of this blank paper. I dined with an American, this evening, at the Palais Royal, where he and a young Englishman, whom we met there, talked of the merits and demerits of their several countries, until their patriotism grew outrageous.

My rule is, to waive all discussions in which passion and prejudice have the mastery of reason. As far as Paris is concerned, and the travelling English whom I know here, America is yet undiscovered, and this ignorance, to us who think we have strutted into great historical importance, is sometimes quite offensive. To make it worse, they suppose that we cannot possibly know much of Europe, or indeed of any thing—how should we, being born so far

from Paris?—and they began by teaching us the elements.

A very complaisant man of the university told me over, the other day, the Rape of the Sabines, with all its circumstances; and a French lady, of good literary pretensions and wealth, has paraded me more than once to amuse her company, by “talking *American*” —“*Quel accent extraordinaire! cela ne ressemble à rien en Europe.*”—“Ah! you are from Boston,” said another; “I am glad, perhaps you know my brother; he lives in Peru.”

— The common people have a kind of indistinct notion, that all Americans are negroes — and as negro sympathies are now uppermost in Europe, we gain nothing by their disappointment.—The English know more; but their information, as far as I have yet observed, is altogether strained through Madame Trollope and Basil Hall, and the other caricaturists. In what manner have the English travelled in our country? An author, intent on making a book, comes over, and tells a lie; and the next who comes over steals it, and passes it for his own; and, at last, it is holy writ.

I read, twenty years ago, in English travels, that we gentlemen, at the taverns, clean our

teeth with the same brush. This has been repeated, I presume, by Captains Hall and Hamilton, (for I have met it in all their predecessors,) and is now told positively for the last time, by Miss Fanny Kemble.—A propos, I saw Captain Hall, the other night, at the Geographical Society; he is a big man, and I did not flog him.

As for Miss Kemble, she has such a pretty face, and so much genius, she may just tell as many lies as she pleases. One prefers to go wrong with her, than right with many a one else. I read her book aboard ship, and was pleased and entertained with it. Indeed, I would go any time, ten miles barefooted only to see a book that speaks what it thinks;—above all, to see a woman of genius, who writes after her own impressions, and sends her thoughts uncorrected by dunces to press.

But is it not a spite that we, who have been so lied upon by the English, should have amongst them a most extensive reputation for lying? It will be a worse spite if we deserve it. We certainly use more licentiously than they do that pretty figure of rhetoric, they call amplification. But from the little knowledge they possess of our country I suspect one may

acquire amongst them a notorious reputation for lying by only telling the truth.

Long ago there travelled to the south, an ass, who talked to the king of the beasts, of the length of days and nights, of the congelation of rains into snows, of the Aurora Borealis, and skating on the ice, until he destroyed entirely all credit for veracity, and was at last whipped out of the country for an impostor. It is our business to profit by this long-eared experience.

When you come to Paris, don't forget to tell them the Mississippi sends its compliments to the Seine, and if you find in London that the horses trot twelve miles an hour, don't you say that ours trot fifteen. It is laid down by several of the casuists that a man is not to tell truth merely, but to consider what may be acceptable as such to his audience.

To make the current value of words in England the absolute test of good breeding in America, appears to me scarce reasonable. Something indeed is due to age, prescription, and to establish fame in letters; but I do not see why we should not begin to use modestly our own weights and measures; to pass our gold and silver even in an English market—if

the currency there happens to be brass; and I do not see why one may not have a *bon-ton* at Philadelphia, or New York, without speaking the fashionable jargon of St. James's.

Language is variable from year to year, and we are too far distant to take the hue and air of an English court. Herodotus spoke in Ionic, Xenophon in Attic, (and Ionia was a colony of Attica) and Plutarch in Æolic, and were all three good Greeks. They did not despise one another because the one said *τοιοι*, and the other *τωι*.

"I have known several of your countrymen," said Mr. John Bull, "very clever men, but not one who had the language of the best society."

"Our misfortune is, sir, not to have a language of our own. The *Henriade* and the *Messiah* are, in France and Germany, titles of distinction. To be something in America, one must out-write Shakspeare and Milton. And how are we to have original views and tastes, if our habits of thought, and proprieties of language, are to be settled in a foreign country? It is to be hoped the time will come when in the United States one may be *sick* without going to sea, and *raised* in Kentucky without being a horse or a head of cabbage.—And pray, sir,

what is there in the language of a well-educated American so distinguishable?"

"I should know you by your first six words. For example, you say *sir* too often, and you use it to your equals, where an Englishman would omit it. And I should know you by your many cant phrases, and by your singularity of habits—by your easy familiarity with strangers, &c."

"As I know you by your drinking your champagne alone, of which you find no example in America."

"And by your boasting of the future instead of the past.—'The time will come.'—An Englishman says—'The time has come.'"

"And which is the more honourable boast, for one who is nothing himself?"

"There is this difference; we are sure of our ancestors, and we are not sure of our posterity."

"There is another; our ancestors send us down many a rogue to dishonour us, and we are never disgraced by our posterity. Besides, sir, it is quite natural the old should boast of what they have done, and the young of what they will do. Nestor was a more prolix and disagreeable boaster than Achilles. Moreover, sir, there is no great arrogance in predicting

the strength of manhood from the vigour of youth."

"But why should not we claim in posterity at least an equal chance?"

"Why not? It is certainly not your modesty that prevents it."

"But without speaking of Shakspeare or Milton, what apology?"

"Whoever heard of a child apologising for not being as big as a man? We have, sir, our Franklins and Washingtons for the past; our Clays, Calhoun's, and Websters for the present. And now, set our fifty years against your five hundred; and our ten millions, and a rude continent, against your twenty-five millions, and your cultivated island, and what reason, sir, have we to be humbled by the comparison?"

"What could you do more grateful to a parent, than prove to her the worthiness of her children? We should rejoice that their merits were still greater."

"We have imparted as much honour, sir, as we have received from the connection—or relationship, if you please."

"Oh, if you wish to disown the kindred, agreed with all my heart."



“ Yes, sir, there is nearly as much Dutch and Irish in the breed at present, as English.”

“ A kind of hybrid breed of Irish filth and Dutch stupidity.”

“ It is known, sir, that the race is improved of all animals, by crossing the breed.”

“ Your remark is too general. It is known that a horse and an ass produce nothing better than a mule.—In your crossing system, too, I remark you have left out the negroes.—A propos of negroes—we have given liberty to ours, and you hold yours in bondage.”

“ Your slave proprietors have not given this liberty ; the inhabitants of Great Britain have not given liberty to slaves, of which they were individually the proprietors ; nor has the Parliament set loose three millions of negroes in the midst of her white population—so the case is not apposite.”

“ Well, shall we end the argument, or shall I tell you of your riots and your Lynch law—and all this vice in your republic of fifty years, where we ought yet to expect the innocence of youth.”

“ At your pleasure, sir—we expect nothing from England but injustice, in this as in every other respect. After poisoning us with the sensuality of her romances, and the billingsgate of

newspapers, she is quite amazed that the child has not the sweet lisp, the ruddy complexion, and the graceful wildness of the infant. After filling our cities with pickpockets, she calls us dishonest ; with drunkards, and she calls us intemperate ; and with disorderly Irish, and then she tells all the world we are riotous ; she has covered our land with negroes, and now she stigmatizes us for keeping slaves !”

“ England has this advantage over you ; she does not grow angry, when told of her faults. You are so thin skinned in America, you do not bear the least touch of the curry-comb without wincing.”

“ England, sir, is surly, proud and phlegmatic, and thinks every one mad who is not as cold-blooded as herself. To be done, sir, America did not crouch to the British Lion when an infant, will she do it now that she is grown to maturity ? — She stands abreast with Great Britain in the estimation of the world, and to sustain this dignity she wears her sword——”

“ A sword is a very bad criterion of merit ; why, a highway robber could prove his right to your purse by the same argument ——”

My Yankee friend now walked about the room, and upset a chair and picked it up again,

and then hummed a tune to show he was not mad. In the meantime, the Englishman had poured out deliberately three glasses—"Come," said he, "I will be corrected by an American, at least in one particular; I will not drink my champagne alone when I can find two honest countrymen to share it with—we will drink America and England!"

"England and America!" replied my companion with some reluctance.

Before parting, the disputants both agreed that their countries had a mutual interest to cherish good feelings, and to rejoice at each other's prosperity; both agreed that England now reaped a better profit from our Independence than she could have done from our colonial subjection; and that America, by the service she derived from English commerce, science, and letters, and from English industry in making her canals, working her mines, and improving her manufactures, was much more than overpaid for any injuries she had a right to complain of in asserting and maintaining her liberty.

A cup of coffee now poured its balm upon our national jealousies, and we parted with an

invitation to visit our Englishman, who is a student of the Temple, in London.

The packets are in—and have brought several fresh personages from America, notwithstanding the season. They have arrived just in time to have the last snuff of the carnival.

The fire at New York is horrible, but not astonishing. Our shingled roofs are more combustible than any thing I know of—unless perhaps it be gunpowder. There has been but one fire in Paris during the last year.

What you say about the wind blowing off your night-cap in your sleep, I take to be mythology; it means to threaten that if Doctor—and I stay away in this manner, Boreas, or *Æolus*, or some of the gods will be coming to bed to you.—But think only of the vapours, the mud and slough of Paris, and then look out upon your pines, clad in all the snowy magnificence of winter. I can almost see old Hyems with his grisly chin, grinning from the flanks of the Sharp Mountain. My advice is that you dissipate the ice, with mirth, and bright fires and old wine; and that you leave other things to the gods—and give my love to your mother.

## LETTER XX.

The Dancing fever.—The Grand Masquerade.—Fooleries of the Carnival.—Mardi Gras.—Splendid Equipages.—Masquerades.—An Adventure.—Educated Women.—The Menus-Plaisirs.—A Fancy Ball.—Porte St. Martin.—The Masked Balls.—Descente de la Courtille.—End of the Carnival.—Birth-Day of Washington.

PARIS, February, 1836.

THERE has been raging, the whole of this month, a disease which prevails here, usually about this season of the year—a kind of intermitting fever. It affects the whole city with a violent agitation of limbs, and often drives the features entirely out of the human countenance. You can't recognise your most intimate friends. The fit comes on exactly at midnight, and then the whole of Paris rushes out of doors, like an insurrection.

Men of the most sober habits, but ten minutes

before—men and women, who all day long were in the entire possession of their senses—the moment it strikes twelve, pour out like a deluge upon the streets; some scrambling into cabriolets, and others running through the mud up to, I don't know where, until they get together in the theatre, or some great town-hall, and there they dance the whole night long, as if their legs had taken leave of their senses. Towards morning, they get into a kind of paroxysm—not a galloping consumption, but a *gallopade*—which being over, they recover, and go quietly to bed, and the fit does not return till the next midnight.

The doctor was seized with this disorder yesterday, at the usual hour, and I never saw any more of him till this morning. After a little sleep, he feels much calmer, and it is thought he will recover.—But I am getting alarmed about myself; the disease is catching.—In a word, I am going to-night, exactly at twelve, to the Grand Masquerade, at the Grand Opera; and I am, this minute, going to embellish myself for the occasion. I have two days between me and the packets; and, consequently, time enough for my correspondence. Good night.

What a silly old world this is! Nothing can be farther from my wishes, than to say any thing rude of your dear French people; but, 'pon honour, they are the greatest fools I have seen in my life, and I have seen a good many. If you don't believe me, you have but to say so; and then I will take you to the mad-house, and prove to you that all the world is reasonable. The Boulevards have been running over with the mob these three days; and the galleries, and windows, and roofs of the adjacent houses are bending under their multitudes; cavalcades, the most fantastic, are passing up one side of the street, and returning by the other for several miles, from the earliest to the latest sun; while the margin, and middle, and all the interstices are filled with a nation of buffoons, trying, each one, by some ridiculous figure, attitude, or action, to outshine his neighbour in foolery: and all are as intent upon this, as if pursuing some main purpose of their existence.

There goes the archbishop, with a pig by the tail; and there a nun on the back of an ass, her heels kicking its sides most ridiculously, without increasing its speed; and there a two-years' baby, in breeches and silk hose, is giving

pap to its papa, a great Irish giant of a man, seven feet or more, in a slobbered bib. I saw, yesterday, a dozen, male and female, carried along upon a platform, leisurely eating their soup out of—what do you think?—If any thing can beggar description altogether 'tis a Carnival.

On the last day, the *Mardi gras*, there is an extraordinary exhibition of sumptuous equipages. An American Colonel keeps immense stables, inferior only to the great Condés, for these occasions. He has thirty-six horses, all of the noblest blood, and on this last day, out he comes, with my Lord S——, who lives also in great circumstances, in elegant rivalry. His and my lord's faces are well known upon the Boulevards—"Delia is not better known to our dogs." The Colonel popped out yesterday, seventeen carriages-and-four, and knocked all the other showmen upon the head. He is praised this morning in every one of the newspapers.

Maskers and harlequins are horrid in daylight, especially in Paris with their gay liveries all besmirched in mire; they are only tolerable in moonlight and candlelight when half the mummery is concealed. That which delights me most is the "*Masquerades*," which I will



now tell you of, though I cannot pretend to describe them in all their pomp and circumstance.

The most frequented are those at Musard's, and the most fashionable those at the Grand Opera. In the former, conversation is relieved by dancing, and many of the gentlemen are in masks and fancy costume, and every thing is intended here for vivid impressions. The orchestra has the extraordinary addition of the tolling of a bell, and the dragging of a chain, mixed with a full war-whoop of human voices. At this house there is much liberty of action with entire liberty of speech.

I saw here one of the finest figures of a woman I have ever seen, in a cook-maid's dress, and looking as innocent as if she had lived before Adam and Eve. I dialogued with her now and then as she came over to my side in the dance.—“Have you a place?” “Yes.”—“Do you like your master?” “Very much.”—“Would'nt change?” “No.”—“How much does he give you?” “A hundred francs a month.”—“But if I give you five hundred?” “*Ah! c'est une autre affaire.*”

At the Grand Opera the ladies only are masked and all are in the same dress, so as to be undistinguishable. If they choose to be

known for special purposes they have then their signals. Here they are the aggressors, and gentlemen are not allowed the first word, and no dancing or noise interrupts the interest of the conversation. The women too, are of the best breeding, but on these occasions, they are permitted to knock off their fetters, and they indemnify themselves not a little for the restraints, which tyrannic fashion imposes upon them under their natural faces.

The Bacchanal ladies of the Greeks used to let off the steam of their too great vivacity once a year in the same manner. The Opera contains many thousands, and yet on all these masquerades it is filled. The Orchestra is at the nether end, so that the music comes from afar, and its harmony reaches the great saloon so softened that the gentlest lady-whisper falls distinctly upon the ear. The parterre, which is floored, and the immense stage, form an area apart for the more noisy and romping world; and the boxes overhead have their company. The upper ones of all are close and *grillées*, with locks, and keys, and attendants, for persons of retired habits.

Several exquisite nymphs exhibit themselves mounted on a platform at the extremity of the

pit, having their innocent alabaster arms, and marble necks and shoulders, naked ; and other charms are trying to hide themselves modestly behind a light gauze, but do not always succeed. These dispose of various kinds of merchandise by lottery.

The hot-houses too pour out their treasures through the lobbies, and amidst the blushing roses and dahlias, gallant gentlemen and ladies whisper their loves in each others' ears, or repose about in groves that are full of ravishment.

—“ *Jamais les jardins d'Armide,  
Non, jamais les jardins d'Armide,  
N'ont vu de tels enchantements !*”

A lady, of what beauty I know not, but from a sweet voice and pretty eyes, was pleased to give me here a half hour of her company and chat ; who is she ? She would not tell me her name, nor even her country, but, said in taking leave, “ Give my compliments to Miss C——, or if you like better her conjugal name, Mrs. G——, the only person I know in Philadelphia.”

I begged much her name or some feature by which I might hope, in the accidents and re-

contres of life, to recognise her ; I asked her a single line of poetry, or even a word, and she gave,—the malicious thing ! two French words only, which added nothing to the information I already possessed of her person — she gave me "*beaux yeux*," which I, like a gallant knight, promised to carve upon the highest rock of the Alleghany. She had like to have carved them some where else herself.

A half hour's conversation with this lady would certainly be in the mind of any one, of even less taste than I may modestly pretend to, a very sensible regret at an endless or hopeless separation. Where there are sense and sentiment, fine eyes, harmony of voice, and elegance of form, it is difficult not to imagine the association of every other perfection.

I was no sooner forsaken by this amiable lady, than I had the luck to find almost a consolation for her absence, in another, who was not less remarkable for wit, than for sentiment, and good sense. This second had all the easy unembarrassed air of a fashionable Frenchwoman ; was exceedingly graceful, and had a shape, that to any lady of my acquaintance, except one, would be unpardonable.

She mystified me, and (not a difficult thing

for a woman) made a fool of me.—“How could you exchange,” said she, “the sober Luxembourg, for the frivolous Tuileries, and how the demure philosophy of the Faubourg St. Germain for the gaieties and levities of the Rue Neuve des Maturins?”—“You sorceress, how can you know where I live, or have lived?”—“In the Luxembourg you had a better look; and there the angels hovered over you to protect you. I sent you a volume to divert you under the shade from your melancholy, and my servant to pick you up from the ice.—When do you go home to America? You should have gone long ago, and not be running about Europe getting vagabond habits in this manner; you have now been absent eight months.” I offered her at last the New World for her name.

“You are not the first of your profession who has offered worlds that did not belong to him.  
\* \* \* I cannot, I am afraid of your rattle-snakes.”

“One encounters greater dangers daily in the midst of Paris.”

“The ladies?”

“They resemble snakes only in the power of charming.”

"I have seen gentlemen, sometimes, bit by them."

"Yes, both young and rich.—What an impertinent question! — For the beauty you shall judge for yourself; and I will not place you in the unpleasant predicament of Paris; you will incur no displeasure of Minerva or Juno in giving me the prize." She then removed her mask, under the light of a brilliant lamp, and discovered, not only the prettiest face I have seen in Eurpoe, but the one I was most anxious to see—the face of my quondam "wife of two minutes," whom I had once met at the Louvre, and of whom I have spoken in a former letter.

I would give you more of her conversation; but who, but a simpleton relates dialogues with himself? Besides, what fop is there who writes a play, or a novel, or a letter of travels, who does not promulgate some foolish adventure of his, at a masquerade? \* \* \* "You cannot either in propriety or humanity leave me without your name or address."

"*D'accord*,—the name or the address?" I foolishly chose the latter; and she gave me her residence, wit an invitation to visit her at her No.—in the *Via di Sancto Spirito*, Florence.

“One might as well have an eel by the tail.”

“Better have an eel by the tail than a wolf by the ears;” with this proverb she dropped into the great ocean, and all was smooth again. This woman, notwithstanding my immense prudence, was near pinching me by the heart. Love was just chirping, but Duty breathed her cold breath upon him—and he remained unhatched.

I know of nothing that communicates half so much enjoyment to human life, as an educated woman. I mean one who joins social accomplishment, to literary instruction. Her conversation,

“More glad to me than to a miser money is.”

And a woman, I believe, is nowhere so admirable in wit, as under cover of a mask. She then expresses her own thoughts; the rein and curb are removed from her imagination, which expatiates more wildly from its previous restraints.

Nor are her triumphs merely intellectual, though not shared with feature or complexion, for in such cases the fancy outruns even the most vivid reality. Pliny thought Apelles had

improved his Venus by leaving her unfinished ; for the spectator would bring out beauties from the unformed marble, beyond the skill even of the divine artist.

There is besides, the emotion, the excitement of curiosity, of mystery, of adventure, and the interest of a first meeting and conversation, not cooled by a gradual acquaintance, which lend many new attractions to a woman, and which give a charm to the amusement of the masquerade, to which few minds can be insensible.

But why have not our Solons allowed you ladies masks in Pennsylvania ?—Because they thought you better disguised in your own faces. No such thing ; they thought them dangerous to your morals. Ladies think, like partridges, if their heads are hid, all is safe ; but our legislators, who were wise and provident, looked out for a better security.

I have myself found one or two of the Christian virtues at a masquerade, very inconvenient, to say the least of them. Such amusements add but little to the immoralities of these old and refined communities ; but the later the day the better to introduce them into a new country, —especially into the cloisters of your too inno-



cent Hills. The folly, the nonsense, the wickedness of the world is far beyond the conception of you shepherdesses.

I placed myself last night under the escort of persons well versed in all the menus-plaisirs of the town, and passed the night out to see human nature in a part of her great book, which I had not yet perused. I followed the two biggest rogues of Paris for information, as one follows the pigs to get truffles.

The Palais Royal had our first visit. Here were both sexes in their fancy dresses and masks, and here was the dance in all its wantonness ;

“*Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos*  
*Matura Virgo ;*”

not gross absolutely, but indecency could not easily conceal herself under a thinner covering. Ladies do not venture here for the world, unless sometimes for mere curiosity, and well masked, as the Pagan deities used to travel about in mortal disguises to see the iniquities of men.

Near this place we descended into an immense room under ground. Here were trulls in visors, and scavengers in lily-tinctured cravats. It was the rabble in its court dresses. At the

farthest end of the room rushed out a savage upon a stage and puffed upon twenty instruments; beat furiously a range of drums with his toes, hands, head, heels, &c. to the infinite delight of the merry spectators. Don't think, gentlemen, you have all the fun at the Tuileries. —My companions did not think it safe to abide long in this place. "We are not concerned for ourselves," said they, "but we are afraid you might be mistaken for a gentleman;" and we set out for Porte St. Martin.

Here we introduced ourselves to the Masked Balls. It was near morning and the common world had danced itself into languors. The dance here is *unique*; every motion of the limbs is an eloquent and pathetic language, especially the *gallopade*. You would go a long way to see a French woman of the Porte St. Martin *gallop*. The gray hairs, too, of both sexes, dance here.

Every here and there we saw an old thing of a woman, whose follies long ago have gone to seed, tricked out in all the magnificence of ribbons, and kindling her last efforts in the dance. In the private rooms, many, fagged out by the labours of the week, were strewn about upon chairs and sofas, or upon the floor, either faint and languishing, or wrapped in sleep. One, a

beautiful woman, lay outstretched, her petticoats dishevelled, her head upon the crossed-legs of her beau, a half sloven, half fop in silk breeches and a dirty shirt, who slept upright upon a chair; another supine, her mouth open, snored towards Heaven; and every where were plenty of legs, arms and bosoms, disdaining any other covering than the sky.—They are gloriously jolly at the *Porte St. Martin*, of a *Mardi-gras*, that's certain.

About daylight we arrived at the "*Descente de la Courtille*." This is the blackguard rendezvous outside the gate so celebrated. All the élite of the Parisian ragamuffins was here.—"Stand out of the way, you fellow without a shirt."—"Stand out of the way yourself, you sloven. When you die they'll not think it necessary to bury you. You can't smell worse."

We got through this crowd with long struggles in a close carriage; for the custom is to bespatter with filth any one appearing in a decent garb. Paris furnishes for her general parades the most genteel rabble in the world, and I was not aware she could rake together such an ungodly multitude for this occasion.

I went from the street into some of their retired places of revelry. Here many a one had

lost his "upright shape," and was sprawling, male and female, about the rooms and entries; brawny men and weather beaten *poissardes*, half covered with rags. In the streets were various entertainng sights. One (a sober man by some miracle) was running after his tipsy wife, and as unhappy about her as a hen that has hatched a duck.

Another had come to an equilibrium, and was struggling forward, yet standing still, as one in a night-mare, or as a weather-cock taking resolutions against the wind; and another was rendering up to Bacchus an account of the night's debauch. Finally, there was one administering a kicking to a retreating enemy, which seemed quite a novelty in Paris, and excited great interest. I was glad to see that the French, when they do resort to violence, prefer that which alone is founded on principles of humanity.

This is the "*Descente de la Courtille*." It is one of the places where one sees the nearest approach of our race to the lower animals; it is the connecting link.

We returned home at eight, the fashionable hour. To go to bed at night, or rise in the morning, is all out of fashion. The sun was made

for the rabble. . . *Carnival* means, farewell to flesh, and indeed there will be not much flesh on my bones when it is over. *Lent* means quiet and rest, and comes very properly immediately after it.

It is to-day the birth-day of Washington, and you are no doubt honouring it with wine and mirth and festivity. I have paid also my tribute to its sacred memory; and who knows but this humble respect, in the "Rue Neuve des Maturins," is as welcome to his great spirit, which is now above the reach of human vanities, as the pomp of your national festivals.

It is purity of heart that makes devotion acceptable in Heaven, and not the magnificence of the worship. I told my two French convives at table (their glasses being filled) it was Washington's *fête*, and they stood up instinctively and drank to his memory, pronouncing his name only, in looking towards Heaven.—To Heaven he has gone by the general consent of mankind. "Not as Mahomet, for he needed not the fiction of a miracle to make him immortal; nor as Elijah, since recorded time has not pointed out the being upon whom his mantle may descend; but (in humble imitation) as the Great Architect

a friend along, as his "shadow;" so it is in Paris, only that you are allowed sometimes two or three shadows, according to your intimacy or favour. It is usual, if you know a friend going to a party, to sue, through his interest, for the privilege of a ticket. It is usual to say, Mr. S.—if you wish to go to M. Thiers' to-morrow night I have a ticket for you. In this way without knowing any thing of the hostess, you are admitted to her saloon.

M. Le Baron de B——, whose acquaintance I owe altogether to my own merits, unlocks the doors of this upper story of the world to me as often as I please to accept his politeness, which I do sparingly. The Duchess is the centre of a literary circle which meets regularly at her house, once a week, for conversation. They do not eat themselves into a reputation for polite learning here, as with us. The old lady has come down from the anti-revolutionary times, and is, no doubt, a good sample of the ancient French.

And how do these upper sort of folks conduct a *soirée*? Suppose yourself a Duchess, and I will tell you.—Your servants in livery will introduce your guests from the ante-chamber, calling out their names; and they, on en-

tering, will make you bows and grimaces by the dozen. You also must go through your exercise. If a Duke, stand up straight, if a Marquis half way up, if a Count a little way up, if a Baron, just bend a little the hinges of your knees; and as for a mere gentleman, why any common week-day inclination of the head will suffice.

Your servants too will be drilled.—*Monsieur le Prince de Talleyrand!*—This must be pronounced with a loud and distinct voice, banging open both the folding doors; and the buzz for a while must cease through the saloon. (*vive sensation!*)—And the note of dignity must be observed down through the subordinate visitors; till you hear in a soft soprano, on G flat, just audible, *Monsieur Gentigolard!* Then you will see squeezing in by the door a little ajar, an individual with his cloak by the tip end, and his knees encouraging each other—blinking something like an owl introduced to the day-light. (*Léger mouvement à gauche.*)

It was my luck to be born in a little nook of the backwoods, by the side of a hoar hill of the Tuscarora, where the eagle builds its eyrie, and the wild cat rears its kittens; it was not my choice, but my mother, who had the whole

arrangement of the matter, would have it so; and I had never seen a Duchess. In coming up the stairs I had to work myself up into a fit of aristocracy. "Mr. John," said I, "you are a good looking man, and fashionably dressed; your father was a soldier in the Revolution—a major at St. Clair's defeat; besides, you are yourself of rather a noble descent, your wife's grandmother was the daughter of James Blakely, admiral ——." With these encouragements I stepped from the Broad Mountain into the saloon of the Duchess.

However, I was not greatly diverted *chez madame la Duchesse*. I did not feel any of my faculties much tickled except curiosity, and the flutter of novelty is soon over; one soon gets used to be surprised. I had a kind of hum-drum talk with an old general, who fought me the Revolution over again, beginning with the Bastille. I might have been numbered among its victims, but I fortunately thought of a *bon-mot* of Aristotle: I wonder any one has ears to hear you, who has legs to run away from you — so I ran home to bed and dreamt of the battle of Waterloo.

The French in high life have become a more grave and thinking people than formerly, but I



believe they cannot substitute any qualities without injury, in the place of their natural levity and cheerfulness. They cannot make themselves more amiable than they were in the reign of Madame du Deffand and Madame Geoffrin. The proportion of ladies in the saloon of the Duchess was quite scanty. This ought to be the case where a woman is the centre of attraction, but it is not to my taste. If I had run foul of a woman this evening, instead of this *vieille moustache*, I should not have had a night-mare of Lord Wellington.

And now, what shall I do with these two sheets, since I have done with the Duchess? I will talk about the weather. Hezekiah would have made no kind of figure here with his dial. Mothers feed their children on the fog with a spoon, as you do them on pap. What a litter of idiots these vapours will breed! I just swim about in them in a kind of unconscious imbecility of intellect. I intend to try some, one of these days, if I can count four. As for the streets, one cannot put a foot upon them, without being splashed half way up to the chin, with every kind of immundicity.

No one ever thinks of going into "Jean Jaques Rousseau," except in a fit of despair, as I do

when I expect your letters. Why, there was a man, who went through the streets a few days ago, to put a letter in the office, and he sunk three leagues in the mud; he has not been heard of since. The French remedy for such weather is charcoal; to be *asphyxied* is a natural death here.

A French girl being crossed in love the other day, and killing herself the usual charcoal way, kept a journal of her sensations:—"At twelve, difficulty of respiration and cold sweat; at twelve and a quarter, violent pain in the chest, &c."—Speaking of suicide, here are some curious statistics:—for love, two and a half women to one man; for reverses of fortune, three men to a woman; and five men to a woman for baffled ambition. Of the men, the greater number from thirty-five to forty-five; of women, from twenty-five to thirty-five; and twice as many girls as boys before the age of fifteen—so say Talset's Tables. Two women to a man for love, implies that either men have the greater attractions, or women the greater sensibility—which is it? I will finish this paragraph with an adventure of a few days ago, which comes in apropos enough, talking about charcoal.

There lives in the Rue de Tournon an old

Sibyl called *Madame le Norman*, whom all persons of sense or nonsense, who are curious about the future, visit. She can spell the stars, and she reads the destinies, as I do the *Journal des Debats*, and she acquired such a fame by predicting the overthrow of Napoleon, that her house has been literally beset ever since by petitioners. You have to bespeak her a week a-head. A great comfort she is to the young gentlemen, whose fathers won't die, and she gives hopes to married ladies, who have old husbands.

Well, this prophetic old woman told Doctor C.—he had a wife and two children in a foreign land pining after him, which proves she can see behind as well as before; and that he would make acquaintance this week with a noble lady—all true! Then she held my hand, and cast a peering look upon it, and thrice shook her head. Alas! she saw in my face a great many “drowning marks.”

So you see there is no chance in the world, unless your prayers shall reverse the fates, of my ever getting home. I will tell you why I was induced to go on this expedition to Delphos, for which I am sorry now, for I think, like Julius Cæsar, that the mind of man should be

ignorant of its fate—it was to accompany your old acquaintance, ——, who has fallen desperately in love with a Frenchwoman—*Mais, ma chère, vous n'en avez pas l'idée !*

In fine, he is so in love, that he has serious thoughts of leaving off chewing tobacco. It was to gratify him that I went, as he wanted to see the end of this Frenchwoman. And now, with this fortune-teller, and the suicides, the bad weather, and a Virginia doctor, I have got rid of a whole page of blank paper, and, 'pon honour, I had no other motive for calling them to your notice.

I will go back to my original text, and try to be sensible. I did wish to decline to-day all that required reflection ; I am also no great professor in this kind of lore, but I find no other subject.—Evening visits and gossipings have now taken place of the tipsy romplings of the carnival. The midnight orgies are hushed, and the blazing tapers and glittering gems are quenched until the return of a new year. Society has put on a light, easy, and decorous garb, which it will wear for the rest of the season ; fashion rigorously forbidding any departure from its chaste simplicity.

Conversation is now the main object of social

intercourse, and every thing is made to contribute to its enjoyment. It is admitted by those who are best able to judge, that the Paris "*Réunions*" of this season, form the very best school that is known of colloquial accomplishment; and that they have a charm which other nations have not found the secret of communicating to such pastimes. The largest share of this praise is, of course, due to the women. Whether it be the language, better suited than ours to conversation, or a constitutional gaiety, or vanity, which is so much more amiable than pride, I know not; but a well bred Frenchwoman is certainly the most agreeable creature of which the world has any example.

I have often seen between me and the heaven of a fine woman's face in America, an impracticable distance—a bright star in the firmament, which one must be content to worship, without the hope of ever reaching its elevation. I have often been confounded so, in my tenderer years, by the awfulness of American dignity, as to be afraid of my own voice; and I have often felt in the presence of a lady—as if made by a carpenter.

Such a feeling, in the humanity and gentleness of French affability, is unknown. You

said nothing of the American "soirées" here, which are nearly as at home, but more lively; I suppose from the contagious example, and from the natural warmth of a friendly meeting in a foreign country. To a stranger who arrives, they are at once a consolation and an enjoyment; and it is to be hoped that a vicious emulation of sumptuousness, every day increasing, may not disturb their frequency and cordiality.

The furniture of fashionable rooms here is more tasteful, and usually more elegant than in our richest houses. The propriety of colours, and the harmony of arrangement, and such things are with many persons the study of a whole life. Richness is the praise of the English dames, and chasteness and concinnity of the French.

In England where primogeniture preserves property indivisible, a house is furnished from a remote antiquity, and there is encouragement to taste and expense; but what motive is there to furnish in our country, where Joseph has as much as Reuben, and where the next day after the owner's decease, the furniture encounters the auctioneer's hammer; and where fashion, too, turns a house wrong side out every six years. Besides, what serves it to put costly

years. Besides, what serves it to put costly sums upon what is destined to be scraped and cut up by one's dozen of spoilt children, or to be carved into notches by one's cousins of Kentucky?

Now with what shall I fill this immense space which remains?—Oh, I will give you all the precepts and aphorisms I can think of, of Paris good breeding. They will be so useful to you in the “coal region.”

You may give your arm to a gentleman in public, but don't give him both your arms.

Keep on your gloves at church; take them off when you go to bed.

Don't lick your plate, but imbibe the sauce with a little bread in the left hand; holding a silver fork in your right.

When you dine out, you may blow your nose with the table-cloth, if they don't give you napkins; otherwise it would be thought improper. Don't use the tail of your frock; this gives offence to refined people, generally speaking.

Don't ask for the *ankle* of a chicken; ladies say *leg* now at table without impropriety.

When full tilt in the street, bow, and don't curtsy. Just do you try how inconvenient it is to curtsy in the operation of fast walking; besides, your frock gets in the mud.

If you cannot go to the "Trinity" to prayers, don't forget to send your card.

If you meet a lady on the Boulevards of Pottsville, or other public promenade, don't salute her, unless she first gives you some token of recognition; if you meet her in Mann and William's Mine two miles under ground, you may. This invisibility gives a lady a chance of doing in public what she chooses;—of carrying some tripe, or a leg of mutton home to dinner. If you see a lady at her door or window in dishabille, to salute her is inexcusable. If you espy her straying with a gentleman amongst romantic shades of the wizard Mill Creek, or by the wild cliff which overhangs the Tumbling Run, tapestried with honeysuckles, you must whistle Yankee Doodle, so as to leave her the impression that she is unobserved.

If you take a walk on Guinea Hill, and Black Bill uncovers, take off your hat also: if his *curvature vertebrale* be forty-five degrees, yours must be forty-six; it won't do to be outdone by Congo negroes.

Never write a catalogue of your linen for the washer-woman. He is a filthy man, who knows the number of his shirts. And get them made at Formin's of the Rue Richelieu. He makes



shirts *à ravir*; see advertisement; "*Une chemise bien faite a été jusqu'ici un phénomène, &c.*" Whatever position you may give your body, his shirts remained unruffled: many a man's skin don't fit half so perfectly.

If you meet a lady in public with a strange gentleman, return her salute with your hat in your left hand, and walk on; or if she stop you, bow to the gentleman also, and respect his rights. I walked through the Tuileries the other day with a lady, and met — I am sorry it was an American, who, intervening, *bumped* me out of the lady's acquaintance, without noticing me. This is excessively ill-bred, and an insult to the lady. I have not forgotten him, and I don't know that I shall.

A Parisian lady possesses greater moral, as well as physical strength than the lady of our cities. In Philadelphia, she cannot, for her little soul, venture out into a public place without a life guard, no more than Louis Philippe; and even then she is shy, and picks her steps, trembling in her knees and heart:—"Pa, don't you go that way, there's a man!" Now a Frenchwoman does not care to go out of the way of a man—any more than the French army out of the way of the Bedouins. She just

takes hold of her *caniche* in one hand, and walks out without caring for the king.—Oh my ! and what's a *caniche*?—A little curly dog : she holds it by a string, and it walks alongside of her, and with the protection only of this little shaggy animal she feels herself impregnably fortified against the whole sex.

When a gentleman escorts a lady to dinner he must not stick his elbows into her ribs, and hang her to him, as his mantle to a post. Politeness requires him to move exactly two feet and a half behind her, and a little to the left. The gait is not a light matter in feminine graces ; it is, indeed, one of the attributes by which a woman is most admired. The Pious Æneas did not recognise his mother as a goddess, until she had turned tail to him in this manner ; and when Juno said, " I *walk* the queen of Heaven," do you think she had Jupiter by the arm ? French etiquette allows a lady every chance of striking out a beauty—even to giving her the black men at the chess-board to show off her white and tapering fingers.

Never look at your glove when you take it off to shake hands.—You only want to show that Walker made it, or draw attention to the gem that sparkles under it. The grand rule is in bringing out a grace, that the intention be

concealed—besides, your attention is due to the individual to whom you have proffered your civilities.

If you come to Paris, you are to have but one child — babies are going out of fashion.— And you must call it “Emile” (after Rousseau’s) and then put it out to nurse.

I intreat you to remember there is no cooing over one’s little wife here; it looks uxorious, which is a great scandal. It is not reputable to either party, implying either that the husband is jealous, (and he would rather be hanged,) or that the wife is a disagreeable thing, (and she would rather be crucified,) and cannot get a beau.

I have seen ladies here often obliged—not having any thing at hand but their husbands—to forego the pleasure of the finest fêtes and parties. I have often had wives thrown in my face on such occasions. This custom has an exhilarating effect upon social vivacity. There is nothing so stupid in nature as one’s husband generally speaking. He has travelled his wife’s mind over and over, and what can he have to say?—and *vice versa*; in his neighbour’s he has a new and unexplored territory; and a stranger suggests new attentions, and gives a new tone of feeling. Besides a little

mixture of evil seems necessary with every good. The conjugal feelings are pure, honest and domestic, but like all the benevolent affections, are rather unentertaining, it is known that nothing gives wit so abundantly as a little malice.

The Parisian public does not suffer a fine woman to be monopolised; she has social as well as domestic duties; and if the husband wants her company, why go abroad with her? Somebody's lordship once said that a married woman was nothing but an appropriated girl. His lordship had not travelled on the Continent. I know that in your town, where a married couple grow together like Juno's swans, or like those "two cherries" in Shakspeare, such a custom must seem abominable.

Ladies kiss and don't shake hands in Paris. Gentlemen kiss too, but only on great occasions. I was kissed the other day by a man for the first time. It was one of the most trying situations of my life. I felt like that personage who was strangled by Hercules.—See the picture in the mythology.

In Parisian high life, husbands and wives do not lodge conjointly. They visit at New-Years; they send also to inquire about each

other's health, and they meet out occasionally at parties. Even among the less fashionable, they occupy separate chambers, which has this inconvenience, that that great court of Chancery, the "Curtain Lectures," leaves many important cases untried.—Recollect, however, that the husband meeting the wife accidentally in company, always treats her with marked attentions; he stops at the end of every five words to say "My dear," and then he needs not speak to her till they meet again at the next party.

Ladies here never gossip of one another's demerits, which goes well nigh to make them all honest. Also a lady having "an affair," makes no parade of it. Her lover is the very last person in the community who runs any risk of being suspected; and her gallantries, if known, bring no ridicule upon her husband, or tarnish in the least his reputation among other ladies. In all nature I know of nothing so unsuspicious as the French husbands. They have got, each one, nearly into the state of that most unbelieving Greek, who doubted of every thing, and at last doubted that he doubted. I will tell you a story which made me laugh this morning.

A gentleman called at the Hotel and asked

the porter; "Where does M. O. V. T. live?" "Sir, there are three of that name in Paris." "I allude to the physician." "They are all three physicians." "I mean the physician to the Royal family." "Sir, they are all three." "*Que diable! je veux dire celui qui est cocu.*" "*Ah, Monsieur, ils le sont tous les trois!*"

I tell you this only for its pleasantry, and not to hint the frequency of such cases. I have, indeed, heard of one French husband, who was jealous a little while. He flew at his wife's lover with a knife, and perhaps would have killed him, but she rushed between, and seizing his arm, exclaimed: "*Arrête, malheureux, tu vas tuer le père de tes enfans!*" and the knife fell from his paternal hands.

In conversation there is a language of prudery, and a language of grossness.—These are the extremes, and propriety is somewhere about the middle. Human nature, especially in large cities, does not bear exquisite refinement. To refine, is to be indelicate; to hide, is to discover. In America, we get, in some places, into the very wantonness of delicacy, and decency herself becomes absolutely indecent. There are two sorts of persons affected in this way; the modest woman just stepping into the

world, and the woman, who has been in it too much. The latter "adds to the bloom of her cheek in exact proportion to the diminution of her modesty."

You have acquitted me fully of this charge of prudery in several of your letters—much obliged. I wish I could be as easily absolved from the opposite offence. All I can say in mitigation, is, that living a whole year in Paris, and describing Parisian manners makes it very difficult not to incur such a blame from you Pottsvillians. I may observe, however, that freedoms are often permitted in one person, which may be very blameable in others, depending entirely upon the comparative innocency of their lives. Is Lafontaine ever taxed with indecency? Yet in words he is a libertine without a rival;—and your baby, too, may kick up its heels and do a good many things that would be very unbecoming in its mother.

When you come to Paris you may talk of the eloquent preacher and the music at St. Roch with raptures; but recollect you cannot do a more silly thing than to make any show of religion. Though you may know your Bible by heart, it will be well sometimes to ask, who

Samuel was, or David, or Moses, by way of recommending your good breeding.

If a coach stops at your door and brings you an acquaintance up the stairs, you must say in a fret; "Here is that sickening thing again; now I shall be teased with her insipid talk all the morning. Why did they let her in?"—"My dear Caroline I am so rejoiced to see you!" and then you must jump about her neck.—"I was so dull, and just wanted your sweet countenance and wit to enliven me."—This is only a little fashionable air, and does not mean any thing. The French profess more violent affection before your face and employ more saucy ridicule behind your back, than any other people; but the mass of kindness and benevolence is about as great here as in other countries.—Complimentary phrases are in no country to be taken literally. In Paris, if a man swears he loves you, and will share his last crumb with you, he means of course that you are to pay for it.

In taking leave of a lady, see her to your chamber door, and then hold the door a little ajar, and wait until she has turned round and given you the valedictory smile; then it is an affair finished. You are not to follow to the



street. You rub your lamp, that is, you ring a bell, and a genius appears to conduct her. This leaves her at liberty with respect to her equipage.

Nothing is so ill-bred as officious assiduities. Good breeding never makes a fuss; it takes good care of a lady when her safety and real comfort are concerned, with kindness, but not officiousness. Anticipate all her wants, gratify all her whims, and overload her with superfluous civilities, and you make her ungrateful, selfish, disagreeable. She will regard your neglects as offences, and your kindnesses as dues that enjoin no acknowledgment. You know what unhappy, disagreeable things spoiled children are, and in their infantine grace and innocence how amiable; their mammas may be spoiled in the same way, and when spoiled are equally detestable, *Nota bene*: the papas may be spoiled too.

When you pay a visit, go away rather too soon than too late; leave people always a little hungry of your company; unless you are of the class of ladies, who "make hungry where most they satisfy."

I advise you in your dress not to follow too implicitly the fashions of Europe, and especi-

ally not to exaggerate, which is so common with imitators. In bowing with the reverence to French fashions, which is becoming in all womankind, have a decent respect to the human shapes and appearances. Why, I have seen bustles or bishops, or what do you call them, put up even in Chestnut-street by some of you, who, under the Rump Parliament, would have been taken up for a libel.

If you are well dressed, no one meeting you will ask who made your frock. One stares at the woman, and the frock is unseen. Do you believe that any one asks Madame la Hon who made her chapeau; or the pretty Countess de Vaudrueil, or the Duchess de Guiche, who plaited those diamonds, more beautiful than the starry firmament, upon their turbans; or the Duchess de Plaisance who made her shoe? No, no, the heart is full of the little foot, and there is no room there for the shoemakers and mantua-makers.

Don't do things always the same way. If, for example, you hand a gentleman anything (a bit of anthracite of the "Peacock Vein," or a joint of the railroad) do it with a graceful simplicity. I know an elegant of your village, polished, to be sure, only with coal-dust, who

always brings his hand inconveniently to his heart as the starting-place, and then sets off in a beautiful hyperbola, and always with a velocity geometrically progressive. Do you be various ; look sometimes beautiful ; look sometimes well, and fore Haven's sake, if you can, look sometimes ugly. She who wears a pretty cap every day, because it is a pretty cap, is "the cap of all the fools."

In Paris scandal is reduced to a minimum, for two reasons ; first, from the variety of events ; —a large city swallows at a meal, what would feed your towns for a whole month : and secondly, because what we call breaking three or four of the commandments is here no sin. As for elopements there are none ; no occasion to run away.

News and coffee are taken usually together, and both must be hot. It is low breeding to talk of anything which happened three days ago ; the news of the last week is the last year's almanack. A Parisian gentleman never speaks but of great events, and those which are just born ; nor does he rashly speak of Racine or Corneille, or such like antiquated authors ; it smacks of the Provinces.

To be an exquisite, the qualifications are to

talk of the opera and the races, and play at whist, dine at the *Cercle des Etrangers*, make a leg, walk in a quadrille, and *avoir la plus jolie maitresse de Paris*. It also recommends one greatly to have a pale face, and emaciated shanks ; implying a long course of high living ; besides it gives a modish languor to one's air ; it is exceedingly genteel. It is understood of course, that one must be a useful man about a woman, and have one's pocket stuffed with her little conveniences. If she wants a pin, his pincushion is at her service ; or a needle, he must have all the numbers from six to a dozen.

To be a gentleman of the *bon ton*, it is necessary not to be suspected of any useful employment, or of regulating life by any rule of order or economy ; above all, not to be without some intrigue. Three or four persons should always be jealous of one at the same time.

With a moderate pair of whiskers and mustachios, with a little tuft on the inferior lip, and all trimmed like the garden of Versailles, he is a classic ; but if you see a grisly monster, with the beard of a Scotch boar, and his hair flowing in all its St. Simonian shagginess about his shoulders, and with the sallow complexion of a

quateroon, seated by the side of a smooth and elegant female, of an afternoon in the Tuileries, he is of the romantic school—I wonder you women don't set your faces against these beards !

Gentlemen smoke now in Europe every where, but chew and spit nowhere. I have observed that the French Exchange, where several thousand persons daily congregate upon a white marble floor, is always pure from the contamination of spitting. The French are, however, often disagreeable, by spitting in their handkerchiefs. The best model, they say, in such matters, is an English gentleman. The ancient Persians were a still better. An Englishman often gets into good, sometimes bad customs, from a pure anti-gallic opposition, as Lord Burleigh turned out his toes, because Sir Christopher Hatton turned his in.

The Frenchman is hyperbolical, and the Englishman not even emphatic ; the one makes loud expressions, the other none ; the one spits in his pocket, and the other refuses to spit at all. However, there is no need of national antipathies to dissuade mankind from chewing tobacco, which is certainly one of the most aggravated

indecencies that human nature has been guilty of. How it should exist where there are ladies, I do not conceive, and, least of all, do I conceive how it should exist in Philadelphia, the most gynocratic of all cities.

But I smell the dinner, and since I am in the way of aphorisms, I will give you a few to eat as a dessert, and to fill the rest of this page. In your cookery, avoid all high seasonings, and coarse flavours, they are vulgar. Cayenne, curry, allspice, and walnut pickles, and all such inflammatory dishes, are banished from the French kitchen entirely. If even the butter has a little crumb of salt in it, it is obliged, like the President's Message, to make an apology for its sauciness. Every thing is served, as far as possible, in its own juices.

Even the ladies have left off aromatics and Eau de Cologne only keeps its place upon the toilet. High seasonings for meat are used only as antiseptics. If you ask a company to dinner, either dine out yourself, or conceal your authority, by mixing, as they do in Paris, undistinguishably with your guests. The guest must feel at his ease. And, take care to observe antipathies and affinities in the distribution of the

seats. How many sin against this rule. I have known a lawyer put alongside of a judge !

The French used to place a gentleman by a lady, and both drank from the same cup, and ate from the same plate; sometimes the gentleman would put the bite into the lady's mouth. I am sorry—sometimes I am glad—that this turtle-dove way of eating has gone out of fashion.

The table in America presents you the entire meal at a single view—in some houses including the dessert; and while the dishes are lugged fifty yards from the kitchen, and await then the ladies, fixing themselves, what do you think has happened? Why, the jellies are coddled, the drawn-butter has gone into *blanc-mange*, the beef gravy to tallow, and the chickens to goose-flesh—in a word, nothing is hot but the butter.

It may be laid down as a rule, that no man can dine who sees his dinner. Pray you observe a succession and analogy of dishes. I entreat you at least that the fish may be hot, and that it may not wait an hour for its sauce. And take care that your waiters have a proper acquaintance with human nature and its wants, and that they be penetrated with a sense of their duties. They must understand congruities,

and know the desires and appetites of a guest from his countenance.

I have seen countries, where if one asks for mutton, he has to ask for turnips also! I have seen servants in our country, who, all the while you are in agony for a dish, are standing and gaping at the ceiling—fellows whom Heliogabalus would have crucified immediately after dinner. A French garçon told me he knew a man's wants—if a gentlemanly eater—by the back of his neck. "I was puzzled," said he, "the other day by an American—he wanted a glass of milk just after his soup."

To remove a plate too soon by officiousness, is a monstrous fault; and to make a clatter among the dishes is excessively annoying. What a hurly-burly at an American dinner!—At the Rocher Cancale you would think the servants were bearing along the sacred things of Mother Vesta—their feet are muffled, the dishes are of velvet. In barbarous times, a monstrous baron used to bring the dinner into his hall, by servants on horseback. A good housekeeper now, by placing his dining-room and kitchen in contiguity, and all accessories at the side of their principals, studies that their services may be almost invisible.—A host of a delicate taste



never introduces one, but as they do a ghost at a play, where the occasion is indispensable—*nodus nisi vindice dignus*. These four words of Latin just saved their distance, and I have only room to add—good night.

## LETTER XXII.

The Lap-dog. — The Dame Blanche. — The Beauty in a Gallery. — The Lingère. — Madame Frederic. — Fête de Longchamps. — Parisian Fashions. — Holy Concerts. — Pretty Women. — Empire of Fashion. — Reign of Beauty. — The Fashionable Lady.

May, 1836.

I HAVE just had yours of the 4th of April, and have seen two of Miss Kitty's, very acid. Doctor — let one of them fall in the Seine from the Pont Neuf, and it made lemonade to St. Cloud. Poor Miss Kitty! I wish she had such a husband as her mother, who, instead of going to carnivals, and masquerades, and receptions, and such places, and giving uneasiness to his wife, stays at home and looks cross all the evening, by the fire-side. — I walked out this morning in one of these domestic fits, and kicked a lady's lap-dog in the Tuileries, and

was called to account for it by a pair of mustachios like the horns of a centipede, and I got off only by making an apology to the lady and the puppy—(smiling to her and patting the dog a little) which I would not have done under the administration of James Madison.

This happened just by the statue of Lucretia, who used to stay at home also in the same way of an evening in spinning; it would have been, perhaps, better for both of us to have mixed a little more in the amusements of the town. The fact is, it puzzles the best of us to know how to behave ourselves. One may fall, like the Roman lady into difficulties at home, and another into temptations abroad. But alas, poor Kitty!—Beware of telling her what I am going to relate to you. You know what a thing jealousy is. Doctor ——— has fallen in love with a French woman. To be sure, she is one of the most glorious beauties of Paris, admired by the very first nobility—by the Duke of Orleans, by the Duke of Nemours, and by the Duke of I don't know what else; and if the truth was known, I believe the king himself is fond of her. If you had only seen her last night at her harp!—a fine woman is dangerous in any shape whatever;

but when she adds music to her charms—one surrenders at discretion.

If you had heard her wild notes, as they thrilled upon the wires, and as her fluttering voice softened and expired upon the listening ear, you would not yourself have blamed a little infidelity towards one's wife, especially all the way to Paris. I hate to keep you in pain, so I will tell you at once her name.—What makes it a little more unhappy perhaps is, that she is a lady of rather a doubtful reputation; and belongs at present to the "Opera Comique:" In fine, if you will absolutely know, it was the "*Dame Blanche*."

And now that I am in the chapter of accidents, I may as well tell you that your old acquaintance, D. D—, on Saturday night, was found dead—(say nothing of this to his sister, she will be so afflicted)—he was found dead drunk in the *Place du Carrousel*; and on Monday he got up at six in the morning, and went deliberately into a tippling-shop in the neighbourhood, and ran himself through the body—(being mad at his father for not sending him money)—with a pint of rum.

I have now prepared you for a story of a

much more serious import—a story which concerns myself. I would not tell it to you but in obedience to my invariable rule of concealing nothing from you. What a place this Paris is! No virtue is under shelter from its temptations. Solomon had a great deal more wisdom than I can pretend to, and he was seduced away by foreigners, who, I dare say, were not half so tempting as these French.

I was looking out a few days ago to see what kind of weather it was;—there was not a cloud in the firmament; but there was a very beautiful woman standing in a gallery almost opposite; so I left off looking at the heavens just to look at this woman a little, never supposing any harm would come of it. But nothing is so dangerous as this cross-the-street kind of acquaintance. The silent conversation of looks, so much more expressive than words; the mysterious conjectures about what each other's thoughts may be, and above all, the obstacle of the intervening space—you know what amorous things obstacles are.

If it had not been the wall with the crack in it at Babylon, I dare say Pyramus and Thisbe would not have cared for each other

a French sou. — She kept looking and looking (I mean the woman in the gallery) and now and then I looked back at her. And if I have been looking into the looking-glass, more than usual, and if the tailor has just brought me home an entire new suit, which I could not well afford, it is all owing to her. I wish you could have seen the elegant creature this morning, as I did, at her toilette; as she stood like our first mother combing down to her ankles (the prettiest pair but one you ever saw) her long hair, which hung around her as a misty cloud about the full moon.

The little shoe soon embraced her foot and the garter her knee; the maid laced up her corsets, giving graceful folds to her *jupe*, gracility to her waist, and relief to her tournure; and incased her fair form in a frock, “soft as the dove’s down and as white;” — her glossy tresses having already received their fittest harmony from her nimble and tapering fingers.

And now she sat at her mirror, and perused her elegant features; she looked joyful, then sad, then cruel, then tender, and brought out each sentiment into its most eloquent and dangerous expression; she studied a frown and then put on the magic of a smile. — The fine rhetoric of

the bosom came next — the rock upon which taste so often is wrecked. Here she meditated and pondered much and inquired of the Graces, how far she might adventure — “how much to the curious eye disclose, how much to fancy leave.”

I walked with her yesterday, amidst the elegant life of the Tuileries, at her return from an airing in the Bois de Boulogne. Unless you see a woman at all her fashionable hours, as well as in all her attitudes and passions, you know nothing of her beauty. She wore a little airy hat, *à la Duchesse de la Vallière*, the bird of Paradise waving over her stately brow ;

“Suave a guisa va di un bel pavone,  
Diritta sopra se, come una grua ;”

with cock-feathers in weeping willow upon the crown. — I went in the evening to the ball with her — *parole d'honneur* ; in her dress of satin, citron colour, trimmed in *gauze volant*, and a tunique of the same, with wreaths of roses ; and in her hair a garland of forget-me-not, with gems assorted by Beaudran, and beautiful as the stars upon the azure firmament. In her morning walk, if she condescends ever to walk in the mornings, her mantle is of deep colours.

She wears in half dress, a *chapeau bibi*; in negligé, her tresses are parted under a *capote*, and her thin gauze handkerchief zig-zag, is narrow by an inch;

———"neath which you see  
Two crisp young ivory apples come and go,  
Like waves that on the shore beat tenderly,  
When a sweet air is ruffling to and fro."

I send you a copy of her washerwoman's list for the last week. I have seen one of the Queen Elizabeth's somewhere, which began thus: Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, Ireland and France, Defender of the Faith. *Two petticoats, &c.* This Frenchwoman's is without preface as follows: One frock, *à l'abri galant*; one ditto, *souris effrayé*; two ditto, *rasurées*; one jupon *inexorable*; two ditto, *implacables*; with other articles too tedious to enumerate.

Apropos. The department of the wash-tub is important, and I may as well give you here its statistics. There is the *Bourgeoise*, who superintends, and under her in order, the *savo-neuse*, the *empeseuse* and *refineuse*. A plain washerwoman has forty-two sous per day, and a starcher, clear starcher and ironer, three francs.



There is scarcely any thing in Paris more neat and elegant than a *Lingère*. Each branch is brought, by a division of labour, to a nice perfection, which you will see in no other country; but, to find a single person, who can put a shirt through all its varieties, is nearly impossible. A gentleman's account stands thus: Une chemise, *trois sous*; une veste, *trois sous*; une pantalon de drap, *six sous*; un collet, *un sou*; pair de bas, *deux sous*. And the washerwoman, when she brings you in your linen, will come in her court dress, and counting your shirts, she will inquire after your health, and as she retires she will have the "honour to salute you." Madame Frederic is one of the notabilities of Paris, and no one who has a proper respect for clean linen ever speaks to her but with his hat in his hand; she has a *reputation Européenne*, but she refuses to wash any thing under a ministerial shirt — and not even that, if it be worn twice.

And now I will proceed to tell you who this elegant woman is, in whom, by this time, you must have taken some interest. She is a Parisian by birth and education, a married woman, and the greatest coquette and most capricious creature of all Paris; and yet all

Paris—alas, more than all Paris, does nothing but run after her. As for me, I declare with Cicero, “*malle me errare cum illa, quam aliis recte sapere.*”

She has a brother too, as much admired by the ladies as she by the gentlemen, and is so exquisite in taste and dress, that many doubt whether he himself may not be of the softer gender. I wish I had time to describe to you his wardrobe also. His *petite redingote* of blue, and his white *pantalons* in contrast with his black vest and azure cravat, for the morning promenade; his graceful *Polonaise* trousers black, and vest white, for the field sports, and his——

——But he is a proud and insolent fellow, and I hate him because he always has an eye upon his sister, and unless you ruin yourself altogether, in expenses for new coats, he won't speak to you. In fine, to keep you no longer in suspense about this elegant couple——they are called “The Fashions.” Enough of parables; to-morrow I will treat you to matters of fact.

To-morrow, May 8th.

This old fool, Paris, has turned out again upon the Boulevards, three days of this week, as thick as a *Mardi gras*; it is called the *fête de Long-*

*champs*, and the object is to determine the fashions for the coming season. The most important decision of this year seems to be the entire suppression of "gigot sleeves." Only think; they were last year as wide as the British Channel, and now they are to be all at once razed to the quick. The public, however, does not submit quietly to the curtailment. Nothing else indeed but mutton sleeves and the President's message is thought fit for conversation, or discussion in the newspapers, this month past. It is found to be exceedingly difficult to legislate for the head and shoulders, and lower parts at the same time; what is a benefit to one section being a prejudice to the other. The waist especially is indignant; it has been straightened enough and squeezed enough in all conscience ever since it was first invented. It has remonstrated; and petition after petition has been sent in, signed by all the neighbouring states, threatening to nullify the union, unless these restrictions are taken off. However, by relieving a little the flatness and nakedness of the arm with a row or two of *point d'Angleterre*, it is supposed a compromise may be effected. Indeed I have already seen several pairs of these sleeves venturing abroad, and two yesterday

amidst the *bravas* of the Tuileries. But what a figure is a woman, shrunk into those narrow circumstances above, and so prominent beneath! she seems scarcely of the same species. She is Horace's *mulier formosa superné* reversed.

Another decree of the Longchamps is to lengthen the frock still more at the tail; though longer already than cleanliness or mercy to many a reluctant pair of ankles should have permitted. Ankles are said to be very beautiful in Paris, and they resisted with all their might this innovation the last season; they had enjoyed the privilege of being seen for years, and it was natural they should take some steps to maintain it; but did it avail? In this you see only another signal example of the despotism of Fashion. Not two years ago a frock was circumcised mid-leg—no one indeed looked at a lady's legs, as a matter of curiosity, much below the knee—and now, unless in a whirlwind or stepping into a coach, not a "peeping ankle" is to be seen upon the whole pavé of Paris. Alas, all you can see now-a-days is

"The feet, that from each petticoat  
Like little mice creep in and out."

Formerly, the cause of going to Longchamps was to say mass; now it is a mutton-sleeve.

This Longchamps was once a Convent, and was founded by St. Louis's sister, Isabelle de France, who after her death performed in this place (a pretty good number for a woman) forty miracles. The place therefore became very celebrated; pilgrims visited it by thousands, and the sick were carried there to be cured, and princesses shut themselves up in it from the temptations of the world. But these nuns were very pretty, and the rakes of Paris went thither on pilgrimage also; amongst the rest went Henry the Fourth to court Mademoiselle Catherine de Vêr-dun.

In the course of time every one heard certain holy concerts spoken of, that were given there on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays of the Holy week, (the days now celebrated.) On which occasions the church was illuminated, embalmed with incense, and the little nuns sang so sweetly, that many pious people thought their songs not of this earth, but hymns that came directly from the celestial choirs: and the crowds that frequented Longchamps was immense.

Not the inhabitants of Paris only came, but of London and other foreign cities, striving to rival each other in the richness of their dresses, and the magnificence of their equipages.

Their emulation went so far at last, that the very wheels of the chariots were often gilt, and the shoes of the horses were also of the precious metals ; and the coachmen and footmen more gold than gold (*κρυσσω κρυσσοτερα.*) But again libertinism broke into the sacred cloisters, and the concerts were suppressed ; finally the Revolution came, and the convent was demolished ; not a stone was left to testify the miracles of Isabelle de France. But the multitude still continues its annual pilgrimage to Longchamps.

In the present fêtes there is scarcely any thing which recalls the sumptuousness of ancient times. Coaches indeed are varnished, stirrups are burnished, and lacqueys have a new livery ; and here and there an English lord, or an American Colonel blazes out with chariots, postilions, and mounted gens d'armes. The French aristocracy has been so unvarnished by the Revolution, that twenty thousand a year has got very little chance of being exceedingly magnificent.

The procession is an uninterrupted train of vehicles of all sorts in motion the whole length of the Boulevards ; and up through the Champs Elysées to the Bois de Boulogne, a distance of about four miles, and having arrived at a cer-

tain spot, the cavalcade wheels about and returns in the same manner; the one side of the way being used for going and the other for coming. The chief concern of the day is, the exhibition of pretty women in open barouches, clad in the splendours and novelties of the season. Mounted beaux, too, on steeds richly caparisoned are exceedingly in favour.

The decrees of Longchamps, like Cæsar's, go forth upon the whole earth; and it is the only tribunal that can claim upon the earth this extensive jurisdiction. A revolution has passed, like a hurricane, over its very throne, and left its authority undisturbed; and there is no reason to believe that this supreme and universal power will ever pass away. Causes and effects both co-operate to perpetuate its existence. In other countries, men and women, follow fashion, and have consequently little exercise of taste or invention; but the Parisians are by general consent inventors; they are gay, vain and ostentatious, and from the nature of their commerce, and from the number of strangers who are induced to reside amongst them, they will give always to dress and fashion an importance they can have no where else. Let us then recognise our legitimate sovereigns, and bow

graciously to their natural and indisputable authority. Let us recognise, too, the wisdom of Providence, which by giving a diversity of products to the earth, and of capacities to the civilised nations, who inhabit it, has bound them by ties of mutual necessity, to live together in peace, and harmony. The savages of our country, who have no such ties, who have but the same pursuits and capacities, have also but one passion, the destruction of each other.

To compare the American and French modiste, is to compare the mere manual operation, to the imaginative and intelligent exercise of the mind. A French bonnet maker is not made, she is born ; she meditates, she invents, she conceives a hat—as much as Pindar did a lyric poem. And when she has made you a hat, your only wonder is, whether the hat was made for you, or you were made for the hat.

Why, in Philadelphia a hat may be worn by two faces ; here it is a constituent part of the woman it was invented for, and they cannot be separated from each other without injury to both. Do you believe that *Madame Palmyre* ever makes two frocks alike ? it would be the ruin of the woman's reputation. What kind of feelings must a lady have, coming into



an assembly, and finding another woman's frock having the same physiognomy as her own ! I have seen more than one in a fit of hysterics from this very occurrence. And do you believe that *Simon's* chapeaux are formed upon the cold precepts of the schools, or *Herbault's bibis* ? Do you think that *Michael's* shoes, or those exquisite bottines of *Gelot*, or those kid gloves of *Boivin* are produced without enthusiasm ? or *Batton's* flowers or *Cartier's* plumes, without inspiration ?

A modiste in America indeed !—why the same woman cuts out a frock and makes it ! The same woman who does the head-work of a bonnet, does the stitchings ! In France there is an adaptation of labour to the abilities of the artist ; and a modiste *en chef* no more thinks of the manipulation of a frock, than Scribe of a vaudeville, or Carême of a dinner.

Nor does she suffer her genius to be dissipated and wasted upon varieties even the most important. Each branch has its professor, whose whole mind is concentrated upon this one object. Even the invention has its specialities. One adapts colours to complexions, and another studies the proportions of the human form, and its shapes, and the congruity of dresses with its

various sizes; how to bring out an attraction more seductive by the sacrifice of one less potent; where to enhance a beauty by a defect; and how to discover a charm under pretext of concealing it; one is a kind of Minister of the Interior, another of Foreign Affairs.

In the manual operations, too, the same series is observed. One folds, another crumples, one bastes, another rips; one spends her days in "undoing," another in "trying-on," another again grows old in puckering, and so in crisping, pranking, curling, and flouncing—all have their several functions, and all their tasks assorted to their several abilities.

At the fête of the Longchamps the eye is dazzled by the splendour, and the attention is distracted by the variety. A fashion, to have vogue, must present itself in a more "questionable shape." A pretty woman is therefore selected, who for a season may personate the many-coloured goddess; she is called during her reign the "Most fashionable"—not indeed as the king is called the "Most Christian," for truly, she is the most fashionable—"la plus à la mode de Paris."

The Parisians have a way of getting this fashionable woman up, pretty much as we get

up a great man in the United States. A few of the leaders of fashion, young gentlemen in their first down, having made choice of a fit person, first direct upon her all the rays of their admiration. She is not required to be a duchess, or to have any more beauty or accomplishments than her neighbours, but she had better be the wife of a rich banker. If she rides out of an afternoon to the Bois de Boulogne, then will a dozen of these fashionables gather around her barouche; and hats in hand, they will canter alongside; they will be unable to contain their admiration, and they will set the multitude gaping. Thus in the crowd one stares at the heavens, and another, till at last the world is on the gaze; and as all see different wonders in the skies, one a whale, another a weasel, and many phantasms and idle visions; so in the heaven of this lady's face, beauties are now struck out that had remained, but for this general regard, for ever undiscovered; beauties which herself, if possible, had never seen.

——— "As learned critics view

In Homer, beauties Homer never knew."

The same gallants pursue her to the opera,

and there gather into her box with noise and bustle and assiduities, till they have drawn the whole house upon her, and every glass is pointed ; as in the chase, where the hare stands at bay, and the hunters have but a single aim ; only that here the danger is reversed.

So at the concert, and so at the ball, where she is engaged for twenty sets a-head, before half up the stairs ; so every where the same ardour, the same *empressement*, the same adoration. She is gazetted too in the newspapers, and all her particulars, jetty hair, inky eyebrows, turn-up nose, pouting lips ; every thing circumstantially described. Every one knows her, every one loves her, and every one not wishing to pass for a clown, without taste, swears she is adorable. She is in every one's mouth, she is in every one's heart, she is—in a word, she is *la femme la plus à la mode de Paris*.

Thus our fashionable lady is turned about in the vortex of dissipation till Spring, and enjoys a flood of frothy adulation beyond the lot of all other monarchs. The spring arrives, and then the summer ; and being fashionable, she leaves of course during the warm months for the Waterings, or her castle in a distant province, and re-

turns in the Autumn: and in the Autumn she finds another "Fashionable Lady" in her place. It is scarce to be expected that such violent admiration should be bestowed on the same person for more than a season. She now abdicates and sinks into obscurity, or which is more common, being unable to endure the reverse of fortune, dies of mortification and spite.

I send you this by Mr. C——, of Philadelphia, with a single sheet of music, a delightful air from the Puritani—an air which is graven upon ten thousand hearts. Oh, if you had heard Rubini sing it over the coffin of Bellini at the Invalids! The sexton wept. It stole upon the ear as if from the spheres—mournful as the wood-pigeon's moan:—

—— "Soft as the mother's lullaby  
When babies sleep."

Learn to sing it in your most plaintive voice. —  
I will love you the more for recalling one of the tenderest scenes of my absence. Good night.

## LETTER XXIII.

Return of Spring.—A New Venus.—The Artesian Well.—  
Montmartre—Donjon of Vincennes.—St. Ouen.—St.  
Germain.—The Pretender.—Machine de Marli.—Ver-  
sailles.—The Water-works.—The Swiss Garden.—  
Trianon.—Races at Chantilly.—Stables of the Great  
Condé.—Lodgings in a French Village.—A Domestic  
Occurrence.—The Boots.—The Alarm.—The Bugs.—  
Extract from Pepys.—Delights of Chantilly.—Unlucky  
Days.—Solitude in a Crowd.—The Cure.—The King's  
Birth-day.—The Concert.—The Fire-works.—The Il-  
luminations.—The Buffoons.—Punch.—The Eating De-  
partment.—The Mat de Cocagne.

Paris, May 6th, 1836.

YOUR letter, of March the 25th, has arrived.  
I am sorry to hear the north wind has given  
himself such airs. Here he has been quite  
reasonable. The lilacs of the Luxembourg are  
again in their pride. The gardener is stirring  
up the loose earth, while May recalls the roses

with refreshing showers. How delightful to see the Spring thus repairing the desolations of Winter! Your trees of Pine Hill, which persevere in being green the year round, do not please so much as those which strip off in November, and put on their green and flowery robes in April. Pines are called rightly, the dress of winter and the mourning of summer.

What has immutability to do with this earth? where one tires even with a uniformity of excellence. If I were to make, like Ovid, a golden age, I would say not a word of eternal Spring. How delightful is this morning! The sun has just poured out its first rays upon the dews, and every lilac has a pearl in its ear. They are setting out, in the Palais Royal, a new Venus of the whitest marble. Look at the jade, in the south-east corner, in her impudent attitude; she is stooping, and ungartering a snake from her leg. Pretty, to be sure, if one had a taste for a hieroglyphic woman; as for me, I like the little thing in its natural attributes of flesh and blood, in its straight nose; lips double dyed; and overlooking the humid eye of gray, or dark, or blue, and the "darling little foot."

They are also setting out chairs for the

Summer, and the gallery of Orleans already weeps its empty halls. These chairs are let at two sous the sitting, and bring money to the private purse of our "citizen king." The "right of location" is 32,000 francs, and the lessee gets rich by the bargain. This sitting out upon chairs is an ancient custom; it is the way Frenchwomen take a walk. I have read in Scarron some verses in allusion to it.

Tous les jours une chaise  
Me coûte un écu,  
Pour porter à l'aise  
Votre chien, &c. &c.

A poetic husband is out of humour with his wife, whose sedentary habits have become a serious item in the household expenses.

As I am about to leave Paris I have taken several flights to the country, to satisfy what yet remains of unsatiated curiosity; to Fontainebleau, where I walked upon the footsteps of the *Belle Gabrielle*, and stood upon the spot where the thunder of retributive justice fell upon the head of Napoleon. I stood this morning at nine by the *Barrière des Martyrs* accompanied by Mr. —, of Philadelphia. We went to see an Artesian well they are boring there towards the centre of the earth; and



through which we are to have a short passage to the Indies; and to get a peep of the sun at midnight. It is already nine hundred feet; the temperature increasing; and they are going to make mother Earth keep us in hot water. She is to heat our baths, warm our houses, make the tea, and spoil your trade in Anthracite coal; so says M. Arago, secretary of the Institute, member of the Chamber of Deputies, &c. But I have little taste for wells, except in very hot weather—unless it be those

———“*delicate wells*

Which a sweet smile forms in a lovely cheek.”

These are agreeable in all weathers.

We breakfasted in coming along, on the Heights of Montmartre, where we surveyed the great village, and stood on a level with its steeples. This was Henry the Fourth's Camp at his taking of Paris; and lately of the English on a similar errand. Here were a great many John Bullish looking children with jovial rubicund faces, running about the hill. They have profited, the little rogues, by the gallantry of their mothers. The French children of the poorer classes have generally a sallow and unhealthy look.

Next we walked around the "Donjon of Vincennes," its ditches and its towers. It has great titles stuck on its scutcheon. It has imprisoned the great Condé, Retz, Fouquet, Vendôme, and Conti; also in later times, Diderot and Mirabeau: and it contains in its chapel the remains of the Duc d'Enghein, who was shot here. It was formerly the residence of kings. Philip Augustus lived here, and St. Louis, and Francis I., and Henry IV., and Blanche of Castile, and Agnes, called the "Lady of Beauty." Charles IX. died here, and Mazarin, and that wicked creature *Isabelle de Bavière*. I visited this village last summer in fête-time, and had a dance in the *Rotonde de Mars*, and excellent music in the *Grand salon des Chorybantes*.

On this excursion we strolled also into the village of St. Ouen, four and a half miles from Paris. Here is a royal chateau, where Louis XVIII. reposed the second of May 1814, before his solemn entrance into the city. It is a delightful situation, overlooking the Seine, and the old kings as far back as Dagobert had a place here, which Louis XI. gave to the monks of St. Denis, "*Afin qu'ils priassent Dieu pour la conservation de sa personne*:" The Pavilion of

Queen Blanche is yet remaining. On the site of the old palace is the elegant mansion of M. Terneaux, whose predecessors were M. and Madame Necker.

One of the curiosities of the place is the cradle, which rocked Madame de Staël. M. Terneaux is a member of the Deputies; he makes laws and Cashmere shawls—the shawls equal in tissue and beauty to those of Indus. Every body comes hither to see his Thibet goats and merinoes, and his *silos*, which are immense excavations in which grain is preserved fresh for many years.

We now went two leagues and a half further to St. Germain, and walked upon its elegant Terrace. The Pretender is buried here, and several of the little Pretenders; and in going along we looked at the *Machine de Marli*, which desires to be remembered to the Falls of Niagara. The water is climbing up an immense hill by dribbles to supply the little squirting Cupids at Versailles.

St. Germain was once the seat of the pleasures and magnificence of the Grand Monarch. He left it, because St. Denis, standing upon a high eastern eminence, overtopped his palace, a *memento mori* amidst the royal

cup. Kings do not choose that these tell-tales of mortality shall look in at their windows.

We then walked in the chestnut groves and deep solitudes of Montmorency, till we grew sentimental—till we could almost hear Heloise wail her unhappy lover. We saw a tree that had fallen to the earth, and the vine which had entwined it in its prosperity still clinging to it in its fall; it had refused to climb any other tree, but died with the trunk that had supported it. We thought of the perfidy and ingratitude of men, and we had serious thoughts of quitting their society and living altogether among trees. We visited the Hermitage and plucked each a leaf from the rose-bush, and sat upon Jean Jacques's chair. We intended to visit Meudon on our return, to laugh at Rabelais, and to fly to the rocks of Vitry to kiss the footsteps of Madame de Sevigné, but did not. I have now given you my journey of a day.

I announced to you pompously, by the last boat, my departure for London, and you will be surprised to receive yet a letter from Paris. I stayed chiefly to see the waters "play" at Versailles. It is an amazing spectacle, and every body stays to see it. You must imagine

a hundred little Cupids squirting away with all their might, and Diana, Amphitrite, and several other grown-up goddesses doing the same; and Apollo's horses, which breathe the surge from their nostrils, and Neptune, astride of a whale, which vomits the ocean from its gills; with jets-d'eaux innumerable, spouting water, with fantastic figures along the main walks and vistas of the garden.

For the grand scene of all, you must imagine a wide avenue the fourth of a mile, and a row of watery trees at each side, and at the closed end a circular lake, with a liquid pillar rising from the centre, and several concentric circles jetting around at different heights, and scattering the drizzly vapour which makes rainbows as it descends. If you have imagined all this, with a temple, and Thetis and her nymphs seated in it, and plenty of cascades, water-spouts, and cataracts pouring down upon them—this is the "Play of the waters at Versailles."

The multitude of the spectators was like a forest of the Mahonoy. The women were as thick as Catullus's kisses. With one of them, whom I knew, I walked awhile, in the "Swiss Garden," with its air of gentility and modesty. Here the Royal Family used to abdicate their

greatness and play one week of the year a peasant's life; and the royal girls romped about the garden in their linsey frocks, and check aprons, and coarse petticoats, and had bonny-clabber for supper. Louis XVI. was a miller, and Maria Antoinette was a dear little dairy-maid; but —

“ More water glides by the mill  
Than wots the miller of.”

The mill, and the dairy, and the cottages, and other monuments of these royal Saturnalia, are yet remaining. These were anciently the pastimes of monarchs, who had thirty millions of subjects; and they complain that the judgments of Heaven have overtaken them!

In strolling along a silent path through the woods, we came unexpectedly into a little retreat, which so lurked in a corner, that, after a week's stay here, I had not observed it. They call it the ball-room. It is a circle, having an orchestra in the centre, and an area for dancing between it and the circumference; and here are two rows of columns of coloured marble, united by thirty arches, and beneath each, on the night of ceremony, is a jet-d'eau falling in *fleur de lis*, and seeming to sustain lighted

lustres, which are suspended by an invisible thread from the arches. It is inclosed by a hedge, and overshadowed by branches from the surrounding trees. It seems as if made for some king of the elves, or fairy queen, to play her midnight gambols in.

The great palace of Versailles is a long squat edifice, which inspires no great reverence. It has one magnificent room, two hundred feet by thirty, now converted into a National Museum of pictures. There are two smaller palaces half a mile distant, graceful and elegant, called the great and little *Trianon*. With the latter is connected, an English garden, in all the pretty disorder of nature, and in open contrast with the garden in general, which is tricked out in all the embellishments of art.

Nature has furnished the raw materials, and of a good quality; but a tree here is scarcely more like a tree in its natural shapes, than a *paté de foie gras* is like a goose. The sums expended upon this royal residence are reckoned at near forty millions sterling. The population of the town is twenty-eight thousand. I remained here a week last August, and then wrote you a detailed account of its garden and

house of Priam, and the grass has grown upon its altars :—

———“ Where one seeks for Ilion’s walls,  
The quiet sheep feeds, and the tortoise crawls.”

Indeed, castles in general in France, may be written in the catalogue of its ruins. The French nobles and princes are no longer great feudal barons or idlers. The aristocracy of now-a-days has to attend to business—to the Chamber of Peers and Deputies—and to go to market. Even the retreats of monarchy are moss-grown with neglect. The nation murmurs at the expense, and lets its ruins go to wreck for want of repair. The number of royal palaces are a dozen, and their annual expense of keeping, 160,000 dollars. Fontainebleau is content with a yearly visit; and the magnificent Versailles has become a national museum. I looked all about here for the eloquent Bossuet, but he too is so broken up, you scarce find the fragments. His magnificent gardens, jets-d’eaux, and chestnut groves, are the commons of Chantilly—and

“Thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,  
Now sweep the alleys they were born to shade.”

Paris and the neighbouring country poured



out upon the plains of Chantilly, this day, such multitudes as never went to Troy. To obtain a vehicle to return in was impossible, and to stay another night at Chantilly was impossible also; but I had to set my foot upon this latter impossibility. I was so lucky as to meet Mr. ——— of New York, and by a long search together we found lodgings for the night; and what we little thought of finding in a French village, a fat landlady; but so fat, she is silently taking leave of her knees; before this reaches you she will have seen them, perhaps, for the last time; and her husband, still more ill favoured, sat by, his lower lip hanging towards the waistband of his breeches. At the lady's feet was a chubby baby, nearly naked, resembling an unfeathered owl.

My companion, a man of address, nursed this brat, and called it tender names to please the mother. One grows so polite in this country; besides what does not one do for a lodging at Chantilly? Also in the back ground was a female, acting in the double capacity of chambermaid and *bonne*, who had her share in the general effect. She had been frightened, when young, till her eyes had started out of her head, and had stayed there, staring ever since; and

her lips being too short for her teeth, gave her a look of affability without the trouble of smiling. To complete the interest of her physiognomy, she had a long beaky nose with the tip red. She was so ugly, the child would not cry after her. These were the protections, which it pleased Providence to put around our honesty at the races of Chantilly.

I describe this family only to introduce with more interest, a domestic occurrence, which I am going to relate, in order to relieve a little the serious details of this letter. — Night already held its middle course in the heavens, and a lady, our fellow-lodger, tired of waiting the untimely hours of her husband, had retired for the evening to her chamber; and there, being relieved from the apparel of the day, she took a look under the bed; a prudent caution, which she always observed, and which she says, her mother had observed before her; — and what do you think she discovered under the bed? The legs of a man! She fled, and forgetting the nakedness of her condition, rushed into the hall, where we, in the midst of the family circle, sat over a mug of French beer, with long pipes, smoking and watching the curling smoke as it ascended gracefully towards

the ceiling. In the precipitation of her flight she fell over a stool, at full length, upon the floor—exhibiting the incomprehensible mechanism of the human figure in all its proportions. It fell to my lot, being nearest, to bring her to, which I did, wrapping her in a cloak, placing her on a couch, and encouraging her to speak. As soon as she had explained, the alarm became general; pipes were extinguished, and candles lighted, and we proceeded into the suspicious bed-chamber; the “bonne,” with her eyes farther out, smiling nevertheless, and the fat madame, and her husband walking on his lip; one carried the poker, one the boot-jack, and one the flat-iron, and we moved on in close file to the bed-side; and here we made a halt. I felt, (I will confess it,) my respiration stop; I stood in the van, being unwillingly placed there by the pride of sustaining American bravery in a foreign country. I thought of my little children, and then moved aside the curtain, respectfully. You have, perhaps, seen a man kill a rattle-snake with a short stick.—And after all, what do you think it was? A pair of boots;—the lady’s husband having gone out in his shoes.

We retired now to our chambers, where Dr. B. and I were eaten up by bugs; and there was

a Frenchman in the adjoining room, who passed also a melancholy night ; we presumed from the same cause, for we heard him every now and then say ——, which is the French for bug. So you see that not Americans alone are subject to these unsavoury afflictions—*non soli dant sanguine pœnas*. Get thee to Chantilly, Mrs. Butler. Indeed, I have learned from inquiry, and personal experience, too, that this kind of vermin and some others, creep higher up into good society here, than in the United States.

Our better houses, I mean, which keep servants, and pique themselves on their gentility, do not suffer such inmates at all. It is true, that the poorer sort of folks, and even the better sort of country taverns, do not care a straw for all the bugs of Christendom. They look upon them as the natural bleeders, provided for the poor, providentially, and a saving of expense, in cupping, leeching, and other kinds of phlebotomy.

But these English people, when did they all at once become so clean, that they should turn up their noses so fastidiously at others? Why, in Queen Elizabeth's time, in Shakspeare's time, in my Lord Bacon's time, in my Lord Coke's time, courtiers used to offend the very

nose of majesty by coming with dirty feet into the presence. Oh, here is a quotation apropos, in Pepys's Journal, which I have just been reading. "February 12th; Up, finding the beds good, but *lousy*." Now, this is in London, and this Pepys, who found the beds so "good," was secretary of the admiralty, only one hundred and fifty years ago. Besides our judges, I guess, don't carry posies in their button holes—(though, it is not because they have not frequent need of them.)

These are the delights of Chantilly. If any one should go thither twice, he must be a much greater fool than I am, which I deem impossible. Yet here was the whole habitable earth; all the peasantry with their baked faces, and caps like your winnowed snows, and all the trim rabble of the towns, the *beau monde* of the Halles, and all that is richest in beauty, education, and blood, too, was here—not forgetting my Lord S——, who keeps horses for the turf, and liveries for Longchamps, nor him, so enviable for his skin and bones, so recommendable by his thinness, and who makes himself lighter on a pinch, by holding his breath, who rode Miss Annette, though Volante came up like a storm from the south, victoriously to the

stake—Mr. Robinson. Now all these were at the races, and the newspapers have done nothing else for a week than describe their inexpressible enjoyments.

The truth is, I set out upon this excursion on one of my unlucky days. I have read of a giant somewhere, who one day swallowed down windmills without choking, and who was suffocated by a piece of fresh butter the next. Unlucky days are an old woman's superstition. But there is scarce a wise man, who does not tell you some of his days that were nothing but a series of mishaps.

In the same manner, good fortune appears to attend some persons in all their enterprises, while others again seem marked for special persecution; adversity keeps barking at their heels through the whole course of their lives.

My grandmother, who brought me up, besides being a Presbyterian, was a Scotch-woman; she believed she was compelled to snuff out the candle by predestination; and it is not so easy a matter as you think, to get rid of one's grandmother. My silly jaunt to Chantilly occurred on one of these days. It was not enough that I should be run against by a diligence, and almost irretrievably smashed;

that I should be crammed into a stable; be destroyed by bugs, and frightened to death by a pair of boots; the same fortune pursued me on my return home. I hung up my watch by a nail, which had sustained it for six months; but it was my unlucky day; it fell, to its entire destruction, upon the brick floor. I gathered up the fragments, and to close my window curtains, mounted upon a chair, which tilted; I fell against an opposite table, which also upset, breaking the marble cover into several pieces; and there I was, with a broken head, amidst the ruins. I then crawled into bed, where I remained the next day with a fever, and sent for the doctor.

Now I will conclude this very absurd doctrine, with a sensible advice; namely, that you never set out to the Races, on any such abominable, horse-play, excursions of pleasure, in a melancholy, or ill-natured mood; it is the sure precursor of ill-luck; both because you will extract evil out of every occurrence, and, in your froward temper, you will be continually running into difficulties, which, in good humour, you would either have escaped, or turned to a merry account.

If you come to Paris without a soul with

you, having been spoiled a little at home with your domestic affections, you will every now and then fall into a fit of melancholy, which the doctors will call a "*nostalgia*;" and you will wish the very devil had Paris; and you will detest all French people, whatever be their merits; and, to be revenged of them, you will write home to your friends, and you will call the men all rogues, and the women all something else, and then you will feel a little better. I have been in the midst of this wilderness of men, as solitary as Robinson Crusoe, in his island. And I know of no kind of solitude half so distressful, as the aspect of a large city, especially to tender-hearted gentlemen, who have been brought up in villages.

To walk in the midst of multitudes of one's own species, without a sign, or a look, or a smile of recognition, impresses one with a very humiliating sense of one's own insignificance; besides, one feels the necessity of loving somebody, and of being loved. These feelings will be exceedingly bitter on your first arrival, and your fits of "blue devils" more frequent. My advice is, that you seek the distractions of gentlemanly amusements. For this, you must make the acquaintance of some French gentle-



man, (a French lady is much better,) who is well versed in the genteel world, and she will lead you into such consolations and mischiefs, as your unfortunate situation may require. She must be sufficiently attached to you, to take the trouble to instruct you, and you must take the trouble, by your amiability and assiduities, to win this attachment. How much better is this than sitting alone, and killing the minutes one by one, in your bachelor's chamber; it is better, though you should gain nothing else from her acquaintance than hanging yourself in her garters.

Depend upon it, nature did not intend the whole of this life as a preparation for the next; else had she not opened to us so many means of enjoyment of the senses here. And, depend upon it, there is a world of delightful and genteel pleasures in Paris, if one has but the address to hunt for them. My special advice is, that you do not seek a cure for home-sickness, in excesses; if in wine, be assured that your spirits will soon pass from the vinous to the acetous fermentation; if in gambling in Paris, your ruin is accomplished. I repeat, there is but one effectual cure, it is the acquaintance of an amiable and sensible woman. This was the

first remedy for solitude prescribed by Him, who knew best the heart and dispositions of man. Adam, I doubt not, while Eve slept, yet a rib in his bosom, was afflicted often with home-sickness; and I dare say he was never troubled with it afterwards.

Recollect, when I speak of women, I claim the right of being interpreted on the side of mercy. I speak of them with an entire sense of the respect due to the sex; as a gentleman should, who does not forget that his mother is a woman, his sisters, wife, and daughters are women. When I recommend woman's society, you will please to think of the intercourse of the bee with the flowers; it gathers its honied treasures, where most rich and succulent, but meditates no injury to the plant by which they are supplied. But I am relapsing into morality; good night. I will fill the rest of this blank to-morrow.

May 7th.

When I was just ready to go to London, what should have occurred but the king's birth-day; it fell out exactly on the first of May, and I had to stay to see it; and I am going now to give you a brief abstract of its entertainments, to finish this letter; it is already long, but remember it is the last. At half-past five, P.M.,

the king made a bow, and the queen made one of the prettiest curtsies imaginable, from a gallery of the Tuileries; for we had all assembled there to listen to a concert served up, *al fresco*, in a hail storm. A platform was erected in front of the palace, and several hundred musicians were mounted on it; but a wintry rain from the north-east, mixed occasionally with snow, poured down the whole afternoon; and it rained, and rained, as if heaven had no ears for music. A howling storm, now and then, raved through an *adagio* of Mozart, and Jove descended on the fiddle-strings.

At the end of each piece there was a pause—not of the rain, but the music—and then came criticisms on all sides.—“ Oh! that air of Bellini! said the lady; and then her eyes trotted about the garden. “ Exquisite! said her cavalier, and took a pinch of snuff.—“ *Lafond? c'est un talent superbe.—Inférieur à Beriot? du tout, du tout, il n'y a que Pagga—*(Une prise s'il vous plait.) *Le Message du President est donc arrivé.* What are they going to determine?—Determine?—To pay. (Dieu, quelle jolie femme!) *On ne fait que payer dans ce pays-ci.* “ As for the concerts of the Conservatory, I find them stupid beyond sufferance;”—the

poor musician, in the mean time, turning up his eyes towards heaven, and, with supplicating looks, imploring mercy from the clouds.

I did not take off my hat and shout with the rest, when his majesty bowed. I was not quite sure whether the law of nations would justify me in making a bow, until he has paid the "twenty-five millions." However, I said, quietly to myself, "*Vive le roi!*" He is, *sans compliment*, the most sensible head of a king that is in Europe; and I wish him, from the good will I bear the French nation, to live out his time.—But I did not let the paltry sum of "twenty-five millions" interfere with the respect I owed her majesty's curtsy.

They have fire-works always ready made here for such occasions; and keep them by them in a closet. On this birth-day they were more sublime and beautiful, than is common, even in Paris. To look down from the terrace of the Tuileries, upon the immense crowd covered with its umbrellas, moving and whirling about in the twilight, all over the Place Louis XI., and its environs, was a fantastic spectacle, and worth seeing. Have you ever looked at a million of crabs in vinegar, through a microscope? —We remained, a long time, in expectation,

and the mud. What a delightful thing a public *fête* is, especially when one is expressly ordered to be diverted ten days a-head, by ordinance of the Police.

Suddenly, ten thousand sky-rockets hissed through the air, and exploded in constellations of stars, pale, pink, and vermilion, which dropped down slowly towards the earth. This was the note of preparation. Then went off Mount *Ætna*, and *Vesuvius*, and *Hecla*; and a Niagara of liquid fire poured down in a cataract, covering up a little *Herculaneum* and *Pompeii*; and the whole *Pyrotechnie* was by degrees unfolded of *Sieur Ruggieri*, *Ingénieur* of Paris.

There were bouquets of all the flowers in the field, in their most brilliant and harmonious tints; and there was a fierce encounter of knights in the air, and lions ready to spring on you; and there was the devil on a pale horse; and, all at once, the Cathedral of *Notre Dame*, as large as life, stood blazing before us; its huge pillars, its pulpit, its sacristy, and a little fiery congregation, who exploded one after another; a lady went off, and then a gentleman; and, last of all, the priest went out at the altar, and suddenly all was night.—The atmosphere was sick with saltpetre, and the heavens

wept tricoloured stars.—This was forty million times prettier than anything you ever saw in your life.

In the meantime, the illuminations blazed out through the town. The Madelaine stood in a basin of glimmering fire, and wore a garland of flaming beads upon her brows; and a belt of gas-lights, like sparkling diamonds, encircled the queen of streets, the Rue Rivoli; it was a mile long. The Pantheon too, and the Invalids, and the Arch of Neuilly, afar off, poured their ineffectual fires upon the thick night; and all the orchards of the Luxembourg, the Tuileries, and Champs Elysées, were bending under the load of their golden fruits.—How jealous the moon and stars would have been, if they could have looked out upon the French capital this night.—If we don't get up such fêtes in America, it is not because we can't, it is because we don't feel in the humour, it is because ——— in fine, it is because we don't want to ———

I had intended to pass over the recreations of the morning for want of room; but here is, unfortunately, room enough.—I generally walk out here, as in America, alone; for if one takes a companion one is obliged to walk his way; besides you can't imagine what an effort it is to

be always agreeable. I like sometimes, in a solitary walk, to think you all over ; to stray with you by the Mill Creek and Tumbling Run, or to sit down on your piny eminence and overlook the village, and enjoy your nonsense, which is enjoyed nowhere else in such perfection. In a word, if alone, I can get into a reverie ; alone, I can fight duels, rout armies, save ladies from ruin, and do things that are impracticable.

It was only this morning that I fought the battle of Waterloo over again, and beat Lord Wellington ; and when I take a companion along with me, he puts me out. So I went out this morning alone. I was in rather an ill humour, and I had resolved not to be pleased, or to laugh at anything, much less this buffoonery of a *jour de fête* ;—in this mood I arrived in the Champs Elysées.

All the world was flowing in here from all quarters, as the little streams into the great ocean ; and the immense plain was fitted up with scaffoldings for various representations, and tents and booths stood in long rows for the sale of all sorts of nick-naeks, and cakes and sweetmeats, and refreshments ; and here were all the *marionettes* and *funambulaires*, the buf-

foons, the harlequins and scaramouches, the most famous of Paris ; and the jugglers

“ Who teach you knacks  
Of eating flax,  
And out of their noses  
Draw ribbons and posies.”

Are men, thought I, intelligent beings? Is there any essential difference between those who dishonour themselves in representing these fooleries, and those who are entertained by them? And here I stepped into a crowd of persons who were listening to a serious individual who sat upon a platform ; he held a cat, and discoursed thus : “ *Voilà, Messieurs, un animal, qui est digne de fixer l'attention du public. Il a les oreilles du chat, les pattes d'un chat ; enfin la queue, le poil, la tête, et le corps du chat. Eh bien ! Messieurs, ce n'est pas un chat.—Qu'est ce donc que cet animal?—C'est une CHATTE.*”

At a few steps farther was another individual, who recommended remedies for all diseases ; — “ Here is my powder, gentlemen, patented by the king ; it cures the ear-ache, the tooth-ache and scabby dogs ; *à six sous, Messieurs ! c'est incroyable ! c'est pour rien ! à six sous !* — And here, gentlemen, is something worthy to fix the



attention of the naturalist and man of letters. It is a little black powder, which results from the incineration of a little animal, which does not weigh more than four ounces, and which lays eggs that weigh fifteen pounds. It was with these eggs, gentlemen, that General Lafayette nourished his army in Egypt during forty days; here it is — *c'est incroyable!* And now, *Messieurs et Mesdames*, here is my *poudre dentifrique* which is designed to destroy the tartar of the teeth of both sexes. Tartar, gentlemen, is the declared enemy of both. Every thing human is subject to tartar; from the innocent virgin to the venerable matron, all is subject to tartar. Napoleon himself, at the head of 150,000 men of cavalry, was not exempt from tartar. You see this child, (here he exhibited a boy whose teeth were in a 'frightful condition,' being painted black.) You see this boy, '*simple gamin*,' he has the teeth neither more nor less black than pitch, and his breath — You may come, gentlemen, and smell for yourselves — *Eh bien, Messieurs*; you take my *poudre dentifrique*, you just dip your finger into water, spring water, well water, no matter what water, and you just rub lightly, (here he laid the child across his knees, and in the same way

as if sawing a log of wood, rubbed off the paint, and exhibited him with teeth of ivory to the spectators ;)—Behold, gentlemen, the effect of my *poudre dentifrique*, (and here he sold several boxes.)

The oldest hero, I believe, of the modern stage is Punch, and I am glad to see that he retains yet his place at these public solemnities. His harangues here are not always a ludicrous or unmeaning prattle, but often critical, satirical, and even treasonable ; and occasionally, he falls under the reprehension of the police. Several punches have been arrested under the late laws. I penetrated an immense crowd, and heard a little deputy of the "*extrême gauche*" just end his harangue—"the greatest king of these times, I don't care who is the other one." We have been trying kings, one after the other, and have never had a tolerable one since King Pepin. Idiots we have had enough, God knows ; we have now our Tarquin, whom we have sent to travel for his health in Germany. We have had our Nero too, and our Otho and Vitellius as well as our Cæsar ; the *Bon Henri*, and he was a great rogue, is the only national boast. In fine, gentlemen, we never had any thing of a king down to Louis Philippe. My

wife has called three children after him successively; but when they were born, they all turned out to be girls.

“Gentlemen, we have done more for the glory of France under this king in five years, than under all the kings who preceded him, in all years. We have guillotined Fieschi, conquered the Bedouins, and paved the *Rue Neuve des Augustins*; and finally, gentlemen, we have paid off the ‘twenty-five millions’ to General Jackson, and the sword that was half drawn has been thrust back into its scabbard. Gentlemen, when we want to gather cocoa-nuts in the West Indies, we throw stones at the apes on the trees, at which, they getting mad, shower down the nuts in our faces; and this is the way the American General has got the twenty-five millions.” He bowed, and retired with acclamations. This is enough for the Mountebanks and the Punches, and not too much; for even the tragic Muse, dignified as she now is, in her robe and buskins, took her first lessons from the Harlequins.

In the eating department, in the *sucrierie* and *charcuterie*, there was of course a display—gimblettes, gaufres, echaudés, and croquignolles. Their very names give one ideas of eating. Do

you know how to sell cakes piping hot that were baked eight days ago? The bottom of your basket is to be a vessel with water in it, reduced by a secret fire into vapour, which penetrates up through the crevices of your cakes. How appetising they look, just smoking from the frying-pan! If I should attempt to tell you the tricks of the jugglers, I should never be done. The prettiest of all these are the lady rope-dancers of Madame Saqui, whom you will see thirty feet in the air, and ten thousand eyes upturned in admiration. The clown beneath holds his cocked hat to catch any one that may fall.

The most athletic and dramatic of all these amusements, is the *Mat de Cocagne*. This is a long pole of about eighteen inches diameter at the base, well polished and greased from head to foot, with soft soap, tallow, and other slippery ingredients. To climb up this pole to the top is the eminent exploit, which crowns the victorious adventurer with a rich prize, and gains him the acclamation of ten thousand spectators. The pretenders strip off their upper gear altogether, and roll up their trousers mid-thigh, and thus accoutred, present themselves at the bottom of the mast.

“ The first who attempt the ascent look for no honour; their office is to prepare the way, and put things in train for their successors; they rub off the grease from the bottom, the least practicable part of the mast. In every thing the first steps are the most difficult, though seldom the most glorious; and scarcely ever does the same person commence an enterprise and reap the fruits of its accomplishment. They ascend higher by degrees, and the expert climbers now come forth, the heroes of the list; they who have been accustomed to gain prizes, whose prowess is known, and whose fame is established. These do not expend their strength in the beginning; they climb up gently, and patiently, and modestly, and repose from time to time; and they carry, as is permitted, a little sack at their girdle filled with ashes to neutralise the grease, and render it less slippery.

“ All efforts, however, for a long time prove ineffectual. There seems to be an ultimate point, which no one can scan, the measure and term of human strength; and to overreach it, is at last deemed impossible. Now and then a pretender essays his awkward limbs, and reaching scarce half-way even to this point, falls back clumsily amidst the hisses and laughter of the specta-

tors ; so in the world empyrical pretension comes out into notoriety for a moment only, to return with ridicule and scorn, to its original obscurity.

“ But the charm is at length broken ; a victorious climber has transcended the point at which his predecessors were arrested. Every one now does the same ; such are men ; they want but a precedent ; as soon as it is proved that a thing is possible, it is no longer difficult. Our climber continues his success, further and further still ; he is at a few feet only from the summit, but he is wearied, he relents ; alas, is the prize almost in his grasp to escape from him ! He makes another effort, but of no avail. He does not, however, lose ground ; he reposes. In the meantime, exclamations are heard, of doubt, of success, of encouragement.

“ After a lapse of two or three minutes, which is itself a fatigue, he essays again—it is in vain. He begins even to shrink—he has slipped downwards a few inches, and recovers his loss by an obstinate struggle (applauses), but it is a supernatural effort, and his last. Soon after, a murmur is heard from the crowd, half raillery, half compassion, and the poor adventurer slides down, mortified and exhausted, upon the earth. So a courtier, having planned from his youth,

his career of ambition, struggles up the ladder, lubrick and precipitous, to the top, to the very consummation of his hopes, and then falls back into the rubbish from which he has issued, and they who envied his fortune, now rejoice in his fall. What lessons of philosophy in a greasy pole ! What moral reflections in a spectacle so empty to the common world ! What wholesome sermons are here upon the vanity of human hopes, the disappointments of ambition, and the difficulties of success in the slippery path of fortune and human greatness ! But the defeat of the last adventurer has shown the possibility of success, and prepared the way for his successor, who mounts up, and perches on the summit of the mast, bears off the crown, and descends amidst the shouts and applauses of the multitude. It is Americus Vespucius, who bears away from Columbus the recompense of his toils."

I have placed commas over a few of the preceding paragraphs, to tell you that they are taken chiefly from a French description, much prettier than any thing I could offer you of my own.

And now, farewell, Paris ! thou Pandora's box of all good and all evil, farewell ! I ought

not to take leave without making *amende honorable* for the ill I have said and thought of the French people in my fretful humours. I know some of them I cannot think ill of, for the life of me. I can scarce hate the knaves and fools on their account. Then, farewell, Paris! Thrice I have bid thee adieu, and still am lingering at thy threshold.

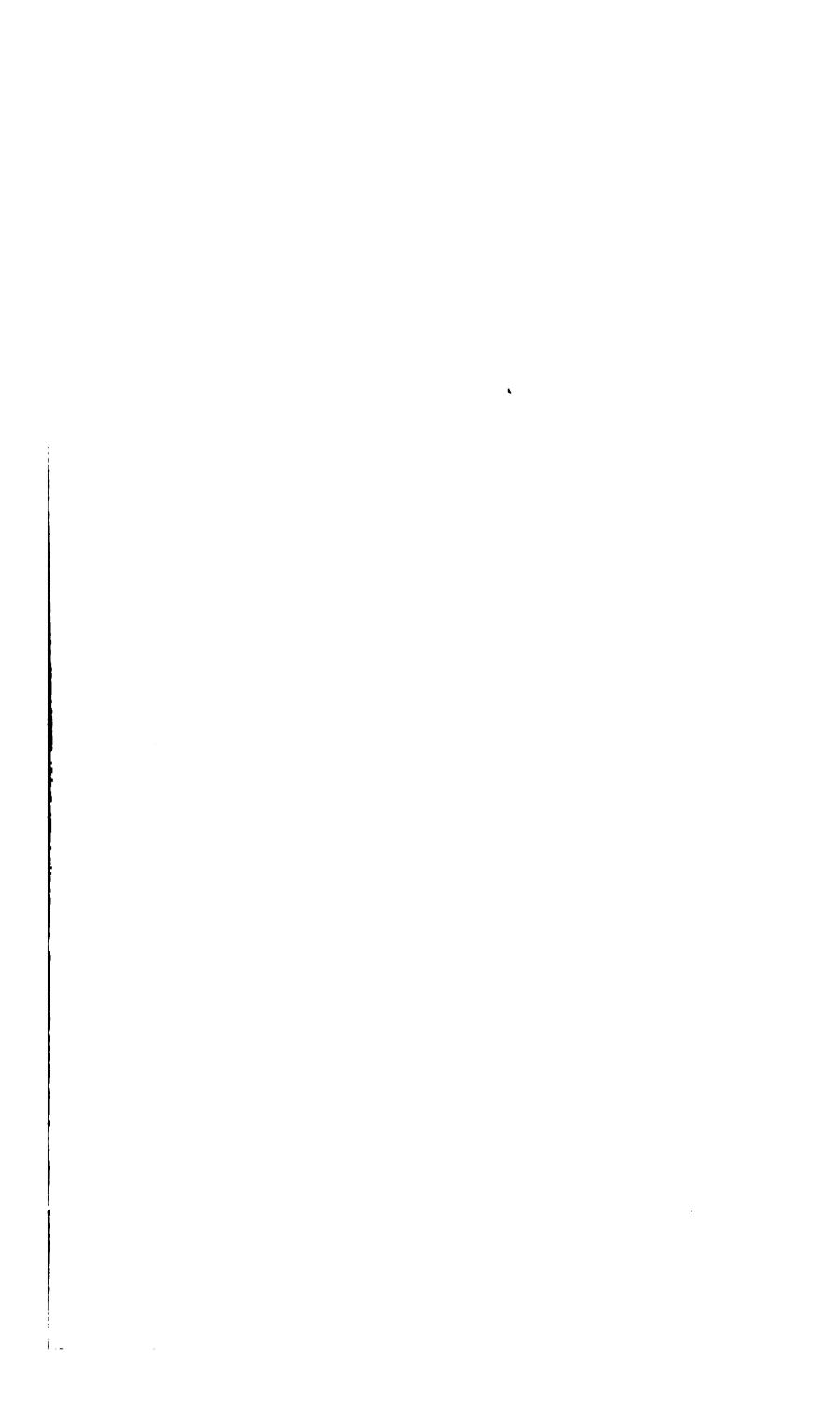
THE END.

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